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THE WORKS

OF

GEORGE BERKELEY, D.D.

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INCLUDING

ANY OF HIS WRITINGS HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED.

With Prefaces, Annotations,

Life and Letters, and an Account of his Philosophy,

BY

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL FRASER, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

M.DCCC.LXXI

1871

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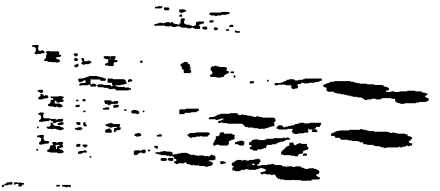

HILOSOPHER.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

ERRATA.

Page 354, line 18; p. 366, note 9, l. 14, *for* 'Gottengen' *read* 'Göttingen.'
Page 433, note 42, l. 1, *for* 'S. Gravesande' *read* ''S. Gravesande.'
Page 468, note 42, l. 66, *for* 'theil' *read* 'Theil.'
Page 503, l. 2, *for* 'Hypothesis' *read* 'Hypostasis.'

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INUTE PHILOSOPHER.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

TO

ALCIPHRON, OR, THE MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

ALCIPHRON, or, the Minute Philosopher, published in 1732, is the largest, and probably the most popular, of Berkeley's works. Its popularity is due at once to its matter and its form. About twenty years had elapsed since the publication of the author's juvenile treatises on Vision, Human Knowledge, and the Sensible World. The same subtle intellect, enriched by experience of mankind in Europe and America, and after frequent intercourse with the freely speculating spirits of the time, is found employed in *Alciphron* in the construction of a philosophical 'apology for the Christian religion,' at a time when, according to Bishop Butler, it had come 'to be taken for granted that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious[1].' And this practical application of metaphysical ingenuity to the moral and religious scepticism of the early part of the century in which Berkeley lived takes the form of Dialogues that are better fitted than any in our language to enable the English reader to realize the charm of Cicero and Plato.

The 'minute philosophers' represent English Free-thinkers in the early part of the eighteenth century. *Alciphron* should be studied in the light of the history of English Deism from the time of Hobbes[2]; but with more particular reference to what was said or written by Collins, Mandeville, and Shaftesbury, as well as to the explanation and defence of theological knowledge by Bishop Brown [Browne]. While the work is an attempt to restore the moral and religious belief of its

[1] See Butler's *Analogy*—Advertisement. The *Analogy* was published in 1736.

[2] See Lechler's *Geschichte des Englischen Deismus*, (Stuttgart, 1841,) and Leland's *View of the Principal Deistical Writers*.

own time, it abounds in interesting analogies to preceding and subsequent efforts to sustain, or to extinguish, faith in a Future Life, and in the existence of a Divine Order in the physical and moral universe.

Although *Alciphron* is Berkeley's most direct act in the English 'deistical controversy,' it should not be forgotten that the moral inspiration of almost all his previous works was the struggle—in the midst of which he lived—between those who sought to exclude, and those who sought to retain Christian Theism, as the supreme rule and motive of human life. The questions of the English Deists and Free-thinkers, in the half century which followed the Revolution of 1688, were for him the then living form of the perennial struggle between Faith and Scepticism. Reaction against an irreligious philosophy spread the glow of earnest human feeling over his *Dialogues* on Matter, published almost twenty years previously, with the intent to prove 'the incorporeal nature of the Soul, and the immediate Providence of Deity, in opposition to Sceptics and Atheists;' and in the same year in which these *Dialogues* were published he was contributing essays to the *Guardian*, in reply to the objections of Free-thinkers. Writings which he published in the interval—the tract *De Motu*, and the *Essay towards preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*—were animated by a similar spirit.

There is a greater appearance of learning in *Alciphron* than in any of Berkeley's earlier works. Authorities are more frequently cited, including ancient as well as modern philosophers, and allusions are spontaneous and abundant which indicate greater familiarity with literature, and more extensive observation of the world. The appeals to the imagination, in the form of rural pictures, are also more bold and striking, and in many parts the work has the charm and sentiment of a pastoral poem.

This artistic charm of these beautiful dialogues is connected with Berkeley's residence in Rhode Island, in 1729 and the two following years. *Alciphron* was written during his stay there, in the bosom of his family, and the scenes were naturally suggested by American incidents or landscapes. The opening sentences in the First Dialogue seem to have been occasioned by the disappointment of his Bermuda project. At Rhode Island, he was accustomed to study in an alcove among the rocks on that magnificent coast, in a region where he had exchanged the society of the philosophers and men of letters of London and Paris for a solitude occasionally broken by the unsophisticated missionaries of the New England plantations, who travelled great distances to converse with him.

The following curious passage in Dr. Chandler's 'Life' (p. 57) of Berkeley's American friend and disciple, Dr. Samuel Johnson, illustrates some passages in the *Minute Philosopher*.

'While the Dean [Berkeley] resided at Rhode Island, he composed his *Alciphron, or, Minute Philosopher*, written, by way of dialogue, in the manner of Plato. The design of it was to vindicate the Christian religion, in answer to the various objections and cavils of atheists, libertines, enthusiasts, scorners, critics, metaphysicians, fatalists, and sceptics. In the "Advertisement" prefixed to these Dialogues, the author affirms that he was well assured one of the most noted writers against Christianity had declared he had found out a Demonstration against the being of a God. Mr. Johnson, in one of his visits to the Dean, conversing with him on the subject of the work then on hand, was more particularly informed by him—that he himself (the Dean) had heard this strange declaration, while he was present in one of the [London?] deistical clubs, in the pretended character of a learner; that Collins was the man who made it; and that the "demonstration" was what he afterwards published, in an attempt to prove that every action is the effect of fate and necessity, in his book entitled *A Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*. And indeed, could the point be once established, that everything is produced by fate and necessity, it would naturally follow that there is no God, or that He is a very useless and insignificant Being, which amounts to the same thing.'

In March 1732, very soon after Berkeley's return from America, the first edition of *Alciphron* was published in Dublin—with the *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* annexed, 'printed for G. Risk, G. Ewing, and W. Smith, booksellers in Dame Street;' and a second followed in London, 'printed for J. Tonson, in the Strand,' some months later in the same year. The work has been frequently republished since Berkeley's death. Passages introduced by the author into the second edition, and afterwards omitted, seemingly by inadvertence, in the posthumous republications, are restored and bracketed in the present edition[3].

A French version appeared at the Hague in 1734. It was the earliest translation of any of Berkeley's writings into a foreign language—*Siris*

[3] After this Preface was written, and the sheets of *Alciphron* were almost all passed through the press, I discovered a third edition, rare and, like the second, apparently unknown to Berkeley's editors, which appeared in 1752, some weeks before his death. It contains a few additions, for the most part of little importance, but is remarkable for omitting sect. 5—7 in Dial. VII. A detailed account of the third edition is given in the Appendix to this volume.

following, at Amsterdam, in 1745, and the *Dialogues of Hylas and Philonous* in 1750.

The first American edition was published at Newhaven in 1803. It contains a short recommendatory Preface by Dr. Timothy Dwight, President of Yale College, which describes the work as 'an able defence of Divine Revelation, by one of the first philosophers of any age and country, in a series of Dialogues, involving most of the questions in debate between Christians and infidels.'

The first of the seven Dialogues is introductory; the two next are Ethical; the fourth is a defence of the Presence and Providence of God, as the foundation of practical morals; and in the three last, the spiritual and civilizing advantages of Christianity, with other proofs of its being Divine, as well as objections to its evidence and mysteries, are discussed. Berkeley's ingenuity and fancy are employed here in defending practical morality and moral order against ethical theories founded on selfishness, like Mandeville's, or on enthusiastic sentiment, as he regarded Shaftesbury's; while his metaphysical philosophy is engaged for the support of Theism, and in the refutation of objections to its development in the Christian form. The social utility of faith in virtue and in a future life; the Supreme Intelligence and Goodness which governs the existence in which we participate when we become conscious; the sufficiency of the Christian evidence for the reasonable demands of faith or action; and the possibility and practical value of the mysteries of theology, are all argued in the light of ethical or metaphysical philosophy, and of experience of the world[4].

The first and second editions of the *Minute Philosopher* are in two volumes—one containing the first five Dialogues, and the other the two last, along with the *New Theory of Vision*. The title-page of the first volume represents in vignette the 'fountain of living waters,' and the 'balances of deceit' are exhibited, in like manner, on the title-page of the second. These quaint and characteristic engravings are preserved in the present edition.

In the discussion, Alciphron and Lysicles represent 'minute philosophy,' or free-thinking; the former in its more intellectual and generous aspect, and the latter as adopted by shallow men of the world who live for pleasure. Euphranor and Crito advocate morality and religion. Dion, who personates Berkeley, is mostly a spectator in the controversy.

[4] The Ethical Philosophy of Berkeley may be gathered from the Second, Third, and Fourth Dialogues of *Alciphron*, compared with his *Discourse of Passive Obedience*.

In the First Dialogue, the party endeavour to find some general principles regarding Free-thinkers, and the matters in debate between them and their opponents, in which they can all agree. At the end of this Dialogue, Alciphron is made to acknowledge that beliefs which are indispensable to the happiness of men and to the common weal are true and genuine principles of human action, and, therefore, to be esteemed *natural* to man. He had previously been disposed to argue (sect. 9), that the sensual appetites and passions, in which all mankind undoubtedly agree, are the only real constituents of human nature; and that beliefs in Morality, Deity, and a Future Life have been artificially produced, by custom and education. These, he alleges, are not found to be invariably the same in all nations and ages; whereas, for a principle to be 'natural' to the human mind, it must appear in us originally, and be found always (sect. 14). What naturalness consists in, and by what marks it may be recognised, are, accordingly, discussed in the next place (sect. 14—16). Alciphron is obliged to allow that beliefs which fail to shew themselves upon our first entrance into the world, and which are not developed in every human being, may, nevertheless, be the constitution of human nature. He grants at last to Euphranor, that the proper rule and measure of moral truths is their tendency to promote the general good of mankind; and that, since reasonable creatures were made for one another, each should consider himself as part of a whole, to the common good of which he is bound to contribute, if he would really live 'according to nature.' The question to be discussed in the Dialogues that follow resolves itself, accordingly, into this:—Have beliefs in Moral Order, Providence, and a Future Life, from which Free-thinkers release themselves, a tendency to promote the highest good of mankind—are they in harmony with, and required for, the full satisfaction of man's Reason and Conscience?

The Second Dialogue is intended to refute Mandeville, whose *Fable of the Bees*, with its generalization of the ambiguous principle that 'private vices are public benefits,' and its satire upon man, was making some commotion at the time. In this Dialogue, Lysicles, the light-hearted worldling, is the prominent speaker on the free-thinking side, in defence of Mandeville. Granting the common principle in which the First Dialogue ended, that the good of society is the test of right action and practical belief—are not the vices of individuals, he asks, actually useful to the public? Is not belief in God and a future life, and in morality, on the other hand, inconsistent with the general happiness, and, accordingly, to be rejected, on the principle of utility? In the discussion of

this question, the dignity of human nature, the generic difference among the pleasures of which we are susceptible, and the case of those who have been able to compare in their own experience a variety of generically different pleasures are considered, as well as the social injury done by indulgence in sensual pleasures, which degrade the individual below his ideal.

In the Third Dialogue, the more generous and enthusiastic Alciphron adopts the moral theory of Shaftesbury, unfolded in his *Characteristics*, compares conscience to taste, enlarges upon the abstract beauty of a virtue which is its own reward, and disparages belief in a future life, as a minister to selfishness and cowardly morality, through its pathological appeal to motives of hope and fear. Euphranor and Crito argue, on the other hand, that this enthusiastic morality is unsuited to the nature of man, which requires a more firm and awe-inspiring motive than romantic sentiment, and virtue being its own reward; and that the higher springs of action need to be sustained by reverential faith in Divine moral government, and in the constantly operating Providence of the Supreme Spirit. The Third Dialogue thus introduces the connexion between Morality and Religion.

A conclusion which affirms merely that religious belief is important for the good of society does not satisfy the lover of truth. He still asks for evidence that the Object of religious reverence and trust *really exists*—that 'God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' The metaphysical foundation and nature of theological belief is, accordingly, discussed in the Fourth Dialogue—in some respects the most remarkable of the seven. Here Euphranor and Crito as it were project Berkeley's own metaphysical philosophy into the great religious controversy of that day and of all days—arguing (sect. 8—15) that, as the visible world has no absolute existence, being merely the sensible expression of Supreme Intelligence and Will, each man has actually the same kind of evidence that God exists—and in a much higher degree—which he has that a fellow-man exists when he hears him speak. That the visible world is a Divine Language, which contains all the signs of a perpetually present Divine Speaker that human words do of a human speaker when one is actually addressing us, is the great truth of the Berkeleian philosophy. And our knowledge of this Divine Speaker, Crito maintains (sect. 19—21), is neither negative nor analogical; for negative and analogical knowledge is, he holds, really no knowledge at all in any practical way. The reasoning in this part of the Dialogue is in opposition to theories like those of Archbishop King, in his Sermon on *Predestination* (1709), and of Bishop Brown, in his *Answer* to

Toland (1699), his *Procedure, Extent, and Limits of Human Understanding* (1728), and his *Analogy* (1733)[8]. We know God positively, Crito concludes, as supreme and perfect Spirit, which is at once our highest, and a legitimate conception of the Divine Being.

The three remaining Dialogues are a vindication of religious morality in its Christian form. In the Fifth Dialogue, Christianity is represented as the most useful and ennobling form of religious worship, with social and civilizing influences unknown to the ancient Greek and Roman religions; in the Sixth, as sustained by evidences in history, as well as in its own spiritual elements, which afford a probability sufficient to justify in reason a practical faith in its Divinity; and, in the Seventh, as neither logically nor metaphysically incredible, on account of the mysteries of Grace, Incarnation, Trinity, and the fact of Free Agency, which religious morality assumes—all which, although mysterious, are not contradictory or absurd. In this last Dialogue, the Nominalism of Berkeley's theory of human knowledge is reproduced by Euphranor, and it is argued that propositions of great practical moment may be made up of words that are not suggestive of *ideas*, i. e. of mental representations of particular things.

That Christian thought is true free-thought, and a corresponding religious life the one most fitted to promote the well-being of mankind, are thus main lessons of the *Minute Philosopher*, which defends, in the mode characteristic of its author's mind and philosophy, the position adopted by Coleridge in a different epoch of thought—that Christian Faith is the perfection of human Reason. Berkeley's *Alciphron* may rank with the *Analogy* of Butler, and the *Pensées* of Pascal, as the remarkable works of the last and preceding century in religious philosophy.

The *Minute Philosopher* was the object of various attacks soon after its appearance.

The Fourth Dialogue, along with the New Theory of Vision which it involves, occasioned the *Letter from an Anonymous Writer*, in the *Daily Post Boy*, to which Berkeley's *Vindication and Explanation* of that Theory is a reply.

The attack upon the *Fable of the Bees*, in the Second Dialogue, called out Mandeville, whose *Letter to Dion, occasioned by his book called*

[8] The last of these works of Brown was published after the appearance of *Alciphron*. A doctrine of *analogy*, however, pervades the two earlier ones. Archbishop King's analogical doctrine is adversely criticised by Brown.

Alciphron (1732), complains of misrepresentation, and takes refuge under cover of its own ambiguous principles[6].

A flippant attack upon the whole performance followed, in a tract entitled *Remarks on the Minute Philosopher: in a Letter from a Country Clergyman to his Friend in London.* The so-called 'Country Clergyman' was John, Lord Hervey, the 'Sporus' of Pope, and a familiar figure at the Court of Queen Caroline, the inner life of which has been disclosed in his curious and sagacious memoirs. Hervey objects to the employment of reasoning, especially metaphysical reasoning, in matters of faith, denies that Atheism is a characteristic of the modern Free-thinker, charges Berkeley with misrepresenting the *Fable of the Bees*, and himself ignorantly misrepresents and ridicules the theory of 'Visual Language[7].'

Among other tracts due to the publication of *Alciphron*, there is a

[6] Mandeville's notorious *Fable of the Bees* appeared in 1714, in the form of a short apologue in verse, called *The Grumbling Hive: or Knaves turned honest.* To these verses the author added long notes and illustrations under the name of 'Remarks.' He afterwards composed six dialogues in defence of his doctrine, and published the whole, in 1728, as a prose treatise in two volumes, entitled *The Fable of the Bees; or Private Vices Public Benefits.* One professed purpose of the book is to shew that the so-called vices of selfishness, luxury, and lust, indulged to a certain extent, are the foundation of social prosperity—that the welfare of society is dependent on the immorality of its individual members. This the author tries to prove, by tracing to their consequences the vicious actions whose utility he vindicates. The original work excited great attention, and was presented as a nuisance by the grand jury of Middlesex, in 1723. The Presentment states that books and pamphlets are published almost every week against religion and morality, which affirm fate, deny a Divine Providence, and recommend luxury, avarice, pride, and all kinds of vices, as being necessary to the public welfare. Mandeville, in his *Letter to Dion*, explains that he means merely, that vice often proves advantageous to the worldly interest of those who are guilty of it, and to the societies of which they are members. He died in 1733. Tennemann says that Berkeley's *Alciphron* is chiefly directed against Mandeville and Bishop Brown, while in fact only one of the Seven Dialogues is devoted to the moral heresies of the former, and a few sections in another to the analogical theory of the latter.

[7] The *Country Clergyman* sums up his *Remarks* as follows:—

'*First*, That, as the Minute Philosopher professes writing to the Free-thinkers of the present age, he should have left Atheism quite out of the question, because it is not the error of these times.

'*Secondly*, That if it were, he is likelier (by telling people *his* are the best arguments to prove a God) to make than to convert atheists.

'*Thirdly*, That metaphysics are an improper method to take for the support of Christianity; because, whatever is designed for common use should be levelled to common apprehension, and whatever is to be universally received ought to be universally understood.

'*Fourthly*, That as metaphysics are generally the most obscure of all writings, so his writings are the most obscure of all metaphysics.

'And *Lastly*, That, by his manner of handling every proposition, he always does one or other of these three things:—he either begs the question, by some arbitrary decision at the end of the dispute, which he had just as good a right to make at the beginning of it (as in the 16th section of the First Dialogue, and the 2nd of the Fifth); or he puzzles and perplexes the question so much that nobody can pick out any decision at all (as in his Visual Language); or else he inadvertently gives up the question, by some slip in the course of reasoning, which he can never afterwards retrieve.'

curious one dated 'Near Inverness, August 1732.' It is in the form of a letter to a friend in Edinburgh, and is entitled *A Vindication of the Reverend D— B—y from the scandalous imputation of being the author of a late book, entitled 'Alciphron, or, the Minute Philosopher.'* To the *Vindication* are subjoined 'the predictions[8] of the late Earl of Shaftesbury concerning the book, together with an Appendix, and an Advertisement[8].'

The most important parts of *Alciphron* are so connected with the metaphysical philosophy of Berkeley, and that philosophy was so ill understood by his contemporaries, that the work obtained imperfect appreciation in the current criticisms, favourable or adverse, to which it gave rise about the time it was published. Familiarity with the author's theory of human knowledge is necessary for the intelligent study of the more original Dialogues in this pious, ingenious, and essentially practical performance.

A. C. F.

[8] For the 'predictions,' see Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, vol. III. pp. 291—296 (the references are to the fifth edition, 1732), where the author gives reasons 'for avoiding the direct way of *Dialogue;* which at present lies so low, and is used only now and then, in our party pamphlets, or new-fangled theological Essays.' 'For of late,' he goes on to say, 'the manner (Dialogue) has been introduced into Church-controversy, with an attempt of raillery and humour, as a more successful method of dealing with heresy and infidelity. The burlesque-divinity grows mightily in vogue. And the cried-up answers to heterodox discourses are generally such as are written in drollery, or with resemblance of the facetious and humorous language of conversation'—and so on, in what follows. See also vol. I. pp. 65—67, and vol. III. p. 6.—Warton, by the way, records the remark of Dr. Hurd, that there were only three Dialogues in English that deserved applause—the *Moralists* of Shaftesbury; Mr. Addison's *Treatise on Medals;* and the *Minute Philosopher* of Berkeley. See *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope.*

The 'Advertisement' is a squib occasioned by Dial. V. sect. 22.

ALCIPHRON:

OR, THE MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

IN SEVEN DIALOGUES.

CONTAINING AN APOLOGY FOR THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, AGAINST THOSE WHO ARE CALLED FREE-THINKERS.

'y have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.'—JEREMIAH ii. 13.

in mortuus, ut quidam Minuti Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam, non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui philosophi irrideant.'—CICERO.

1732.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author's design being to consider the Free-thinker in the various lights of atheist, libertine, enthusiast, scorner, critic, metaphysician, fatalist, and sceptic, it must not therefore be imagined that every one of these characters agrees with every individual Free-thinker; no more being implied than that each part agrees with some or other of the sect. There may, possibly, be a reader who shall think the character of atheist agrees with none; but though it hath been often said there is no such thing as a speculative atheist, yet we must allow there are several atheists who pretend to speculation. This the Author knows to be true; and is well assured that one of the most noted writers against Christianity in our times declared he had found out a demonstration against the being of a God[1]. And he doubts not, whoever will be at the pains to inform himself, by a general conversation, as well as books, of the principles and tenets of our modern Free-thinkers, will see too much cause to be persuaded that nothing in the ensuing characters is beyond the life[2].

[1] Anthony Collins is apparently the writer referred to. See 'Editor's Preface,' p. 5. Cf. Alciphron, Dial. I. sect. 12; IV. 16, &c. Collins's *Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty* was first published in 1715. The second edition appeared in 1717, in which year Dr. Samuel Clarke published his *Remarks upon the 'Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty.'* In 1729, shortly after Clarke's death, a reply to the *Remarks*, attributed to Collins, appeared, in the form of a *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity: wherein the powers of ideas, from their first entrance into the soul, until their production of action, is delineated; with some Remarks upon the late Reverend Dr. Clarke's reasoning on this point.* By A. C., Esqr. The reply was unknown to Mr. Stewart (Dissertation, art. Collins) and others. Collins died in 1729. The third edition of his *Philosophical Inquiry* appeared in 1735.

The question raised by Collins was the occasion of various tracts, in defence and attack, about the time of the publication of *Alciphron*, — in particular John Jackson, Rector of Rossington, and Dr Gretton, Rector of Springfield, Essex, replied, in 1730, to the *Dissertation* of A. C., published in the preceding year. The controversy between Clarke and Collins is alluded to in (Corry's?) *Reflections upon Liberty and Necessity*, London, 1761, where it is said (p. 7) that the threatened interposition of the magistrates hindered the latter from defending the *Philosophical Inquiry*. The English literature of this controversy about moral agency, in the early part of last century, is copious and curious, as also in the preceding century, when it engaged Hobbes, Bramhall, and Cudworth.

[2] Cf. *Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained*, sect. 5, and note by the Editor.

[[3]As the author hath not confined himself to write against books alone, so he thinks it necessary to make this declaration. It must not, therefore, be thought that authors are misrepresented, if every notion of Alciphron or Lysicles is not found precisely in them. A gentleman in private conference, may be supposed to speak plainer than others write, to improve on their hints, and draw conclusions from their principles.

Whatever they pretend, it is the author's opinion that all those who write either explicitly or by insinuation, against the dignity, freedom, and immortality of the Human Soul, may so far forth be justly said to unhinge the Principles of Morality, and destroy the means of making men reasonably virtuous. Much is to be apprehended from that quarter against the interests of virtue. Whether the apprehension of a certain admired writer[4], that the cause of virtue is likely to suffer less from its witty antagonists than from its tender nurses, who are apt to overlay it, and kill it with excess of care and cherishing, and make it a mercenary thing, by talking so much of its reward—whether, I say, this apprehension be so well founded, the reader must determine.]

As for the Treatise concerning Vision, why the Author annexed it to the 'Minute Philosopher' will appear upon perusal of the Fourth Dialogue.

[3] This and the next paragraph were added in the second edition, but omitted in the posthumous editions.

[4] [Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour, part II. sect. 3.]—Author. The allusion is, of course, to Shaftesbury.

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ALCIPHRON,

OR

THE MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

THE FIRST DIALOGUE.

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1. I FLATTERED myself, Theages, that before this time I might have been able to have sent you an agreeable account of the success of the affair which brought me into this remote corner of the country. But, instead of this, I should now give you the detail of its miscarriage, if I did not rather choose to entertain you with some amusing incidents, which have helped to make me easy under a circumstance I could neither obviate nor foresee. Events are not in our power; but it always is, to make a good use even of the very worst. And, I must needs own, the course and event of this affair gave opportunity for reflections that make me some amends for a great loss of time, pains, and expense. A life of action, which takes its issue from the counsels, passions, and

views of other men, if it doth not draw a man to imitate, will at least teach him to observe. And a mind at liberty to reflect on its own observations, if it produce nothing useful to the world, seldom fails of entertainment to itself. For several months past, I have enjoyed such liberty and leisure in this distant retreat, far beyond the verge of that great whirlpool of business, faction, and pleasure, which is called *the world*. And a retreat in itself agreeable, after a long scene of trouble and disquiet, was made much more so by the conversation and good qualities of my host, Euphranor, who unites in his own person the philosopher and the farmer, two characters not so inconsistent in nature as by custom they seem to be.

Euphranor, from the time he left the university, hath lived in this small town, where he is possessed of a convenient house with a hundred acres of land adjoining to it; which, being improved by his own labour, yield him a plentiful subsistence. He hath a good collection, chiefly of old books, left him by a clergyman his uncle, under whose care he was brought up. And the business of his farm doth not hinder him from making good use of it. He hath read much, and thought more; his health and strength of body enabling him the better to bear fatigue of mind. He is of opinion that he could not carry on his studies with more advantage in the closet than the field, where his mind is seldom idle while he prunes the trees, follows the plough, or looks after his flocks.

In the house of this honest friend I became acquainted with Crito, a neighbouring gentleman of distinguished merit and estate, who lives in great friendship with Euphranor.

Last summer, Crito, whose parish-church is in our town, dining on a Sunday at Euphranor's, I happened to inquire after his guests, whom we had seen at church with him the Sunday before. They are both well, said Crito, but, having once occasionally conformed, to see what sort of assembly our parish could afford, they had no further curiosity to gratify at church, and so chose to stay at home. How, said Euphranor, are they then dissenters? No, replied Crito, they are free-thinkers. Euphranor, who had never met with any of this species or sect of men, and but little of their writings, shewed a great desire to know their principles or system. That is more, said Crito, than I will undertake to tell you. Their writers are of different opinions. Some go farther, and explain themselves more freely than others. But the current

general notions of the sect are best learned from conversation with those who profess themselves of it. Your curiosity may now be satisfied, if you and Dion[1] would spend a week at my house with these gentlemen, who seem very ready to declare and propagate their opinions. Alciphron is above forty, and no stranger either to men or books. I knew him first at the Temple, which, upon an estate's falling to him, he quitted, to travel through the polite parts of Europe. Since his return he hath lived in the amusements of the town, which, being grown stale and tasteless to his palate, have flung him into a sort of splenetic indolence. The young gentleman, Lysicles, is a near kinsman of mine, one of lively parts and a general insight into letters, who, after having passed the forms of education, and seen a little of the world, fell into an intimacy with men of pleasure and free-thinkers, I am afraid much to the damage of his constitution and his fortune. But what I most regret is the corruption of his mind, by a set of pernicious principles, which, having been observed to survive the passions of youth, forestall even the remote hopes of amendment. They are both men of fashion, and would be agreeable enough, if they did not fancy themselves free-thinkers. But this, to speak the truth, has given them a certain air and manner, which a little too visibly declare they think themselves wiser than the rest of the world. I should therefore be not at all displeased if my guests met with their match, where they least expected it—in a country farmer. I shall not, replied Euphranor, pretend to any more than barely to inform myself of their principles and opinions. For this end I propose to-morrow to set a week's task to my labourers, and accept your invitation, if Dion thinks good. To which I gave consent. Meanwhile, said Crito, I shall prepare my guests, and let them know that an honest neighbour hath a mind to discourse with them on the subject of their free-thinking. And, if I am not much mistaken, they will please themselves with the prospect of leaving a convert behind them, even in a country village.

Next morning Euphranor rose early, and spent the forenoon in ordering his affairs. After dinner we took our walk to Crito's, which lay through half a dozen pleasant fields planted round with plane-trees, that are very common in this part of the

[1] See *Letter to Dion, occasioned by his book called 'Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher.'* By the Author of the 'Fable of the Bees.' London, 1732.

country. We walked under the delicious shade of these trees for about an hour before we came to Crito's house, which stands in the middle of a small park, beautified with two fine groves of oak and walnut, and a winding stream of sweet and clear water. We met a servant at the door with a small basket of fruit, which he was carrying into a grove, where he said his master was with the two strangers. We found them all three sitting under a shade. And after the usual forms at first meeting, Euphranor and I sat down by them.

Our conversation began upon the beauty of this rural scene, the fine season of the year, and some late improvements which had been made in the adjacent country by new methods of agriculture. Whence Alciphron took occasion to observe, that the most valuable improvements came latest. I should have small temptation, said he, to live where men have neither polished manners, nor improved minds, though the face of the country were ever so well improved. But I have long observed that there is a gradual progress in human affairs. The first care of mankind is to supply the cravings of nature; in the next place they study the conveniences and comforts of life. But the subduing prejudices, and acquiring true knowledge, that Herculean labour, is the last, being what demands the most perfect abilities, and to which all other advantages are preparative. Right, said Euphranor, Alciphron hath touched our true defect. It was always my opinion that as soon as we had provided subsistence for the body our next care should be to improve the mind. But the desire of wealth steps between, and engrosseth men's thoughts.

2. *Alciphron.* Thought is that which we are told distinguisheth man from beast; and freedom of thought makes as great a difference between man and man. It is to the noble assertors of this privilege and perfection of human kind, the free-thinkers I mean, who have sprung up and multiplied of late years[3], that we are indebted for all those important discoveries, that ocean of light, which hath broke in and made its way, in spite of slavery and superstition.

[3] See Lechler's *Geschichte des Englischen Deismus*, pp. 180—342; also Collins' *Discourse of Free-thinking, occasioned by the rise and growth of a sect called Free-thinkers* (1713).

Euphranor, who is a sincere enemy to both, testified a great esteem for those worthies who had preserved their country from being ruined by them, having spread so much light and knowledge over the land. He added, that he liked the name and character of a free-thinker: but, in his sense of the word, every honest inquirer after truth in any age or country was entitled to it. He therefore desired to know what this sect was that Alciphron had spoken of as newly sprung up; what were their tenets; what were their discoveries; and wherein they employed themselves for the benefit of mankind? Of all which, he should think himself obliged, if Alciphron would inform him.

That I shall very easily, replied Alciphron, for I profess myself one of the number, and my most intimate friends are some of the most considerable among them.

And, perceiving that Euphranor heard him with respect, he proceeded very fluently.—You must know, said he, that the mind of man may be fitly compared to a piece of land. What stubbing, ploughing, digging, and harrowing are to the one, that thinking, reflecting, examining are to the other. Each hath its proper culture; and, as land that is suffered to lie waste and wild for a long tract of time will be overspread with brush-wood, brambles, thorns, and such vegetables which have neither use nor beauty; even so there will not fail to sprout up in a neglected uncultivated mind a great number of prejudices and absurd opinions, which owe their origin partly to the soil itself, the passions and imperfections of the mind of man, and partly to those seeds which chance to be scattered in it by every wind of doctrine, which the cunning of statesmen, the singularity of pedants, the superstition of fools, or the imposture of priests shall raise. Represent to yourself the mind of man, or human nature in general, that for so many ages had lain obnoxious to the frauds of designing and the follies of weak men; how it must be overrun with prejudices and errors, what firm and deep roots they must have taken, and consequently how difficult a task it must be to extirpate them! And yet this work, no less difficult than glorious, is the employment of the modern free-thinkers. Alciphron having said this made a pause, and looked round on the company.

Truly, said I, a very laudable undertaking!

We think, said Euphranor, that it is praiseworthy to clear and

subdue the earth, to tame brute animals, to fashion the outsides of men, provide sustenance for their bodies, and cure their maladies. But what is all this in comparison of that most excellent and useful undertaking—to free mankind from their errors, and to improve and adorn their minds. For things of less merit towards the world altars have been raised, and temples built, in ancient times.

Too many in our days, replied Alciphron, are such fools as not to know their best benefactors from their worst enemies. They have a blind respect for those who enslave them, and look upon their deliverers as a dangerous sort of men that would undermine received principles and opinions.

Euphranor. It were a great pity such worthy ingenious men should meet with any discouragement. For my part, I should think a man who spent his time in such a painful, impartial search after truth a better friend to mankind than the greatest statesman or hero the advantage of whose labours is confined to a little part of the world and a short space of time, whereas a ray of truth may enlighten the whole world and extend to future ages.

Alc. It will be some time I fear before the common herd think as you do. But the better sort, the men of parts and polite education, pay a due regard to the patrons of light and truth.

3. *Euph.* The clergy, no doubt, are on all occasions ready to forward and applaud your worthy endeavours.

Upon hearing this Lysicles could hardly refrain from laughing. And Alciphron with an air of pity told Euphranor that he perceived he was unacquainted with the real character of those men. For, saith he, you must know that of all men living they are our greatest enemies. If it were possible, they would extinguish the very light of nature, turn the world into a dungeon, and keep mankind for ever in chains and darkness.

Euph. I never imagined anything like this of our Protestant clergy, particularly those of the Established Church, whom, if I may be allowed to judge by what I have seen of them and their writings, I should have thought lovers of learning and useful knowledge.

Alc. Take my word for it, priests of all religions are the same: wherever there are priests there will be priestcraft; and wherever

there is priestcraft there will be a persecuting spirit, which they never fail to exert to the utmost of their power against all those who have the courage to think for themselves, and will not submit to be hoodwinked and manacled by their reverend leaders. Those great masters of pedantry and jargon have coined several systems, which are all equally true, and of equal importance to the world. The contending sects are each alike fond of their own, and alike prone to discharge their fury upon all who dissent from them. Cruelty and ambition being the darling vices of priests and churchmen all the world over, they endeavour in all countries to get an ascendant over the rest of mankind; and the magistrate, having a joint interest with the priest in subduing, amusing, and scaring the people, too often lends a hand to the hierarchy, who never think their authority and possessions secure, so long as those who differ from them in opinion are allowed to partake even in the common rights belonging to their birth or species. To represent the matter in a true light, figure to yourselves a monster or spectre made up of superstition and enthusiasm, the joint issue of statecraft and priestcraft, rattling chains in one hand, and with the other brandishing a flaming sword over the land, and menacing destruction to all who shall dare to follow the dictates of Reason and Common Sense. Do but consider this, and then say if there was not danger as well as difficulty in our undertaking. Yet, such is the generous ardour that truth inspires, our free-thinkers are neither overcome by the one nor daunted by the other. In spite of both we have already made so many proselytes among the better sort, and their numbers increase so fast, that we hope we shall be able to carry all before us, beat down the bulwarks of all tyranny, secular or ecclesiastical, break the fetters and chains of our countrymen, and restore the original inherent rights, liberties, and prerogatives of mankind.

Euphranor heard this discourse with his mouth open, and his eyes fixed upon Alciphron, who, having uttered it with no small emotion, stopped to draw breath and recover himself; but, finding that nobody made answer, he resumed the thread of his discourse, and, turning to Euphranor, spoke in a lower note what follows: —The more innocent and honest a man is, the more liable is he to be imposed on by the specious pretences of other men. You have probably met with certain writings of our divines that treat

of grace, virtue, goodness, and such matters, fit to amuse and deceive a simple, honest mind. But, believe me when I tell you they are all at bottom (however they may gild their designs) united by one common principle in the same interest. I will not deny there may be here and there a poor half-witted man that means no mischief; but this I will be bold to say, that all the men of sense among them are true at bottom to these three pursuits of ambition, avarice, and revenge.

4. While Alciphron was speaking, a servant came to tell him and Lysicles that some men who were going to London waited to receive their orders. Whereupon they both rose up, and went towards the house. They were no sooner gone but Euphranor, addressing himself to Crito, said, he believed that poor gentleman had been a great sufferer for his free-thinking; for that he seemed to express himself with the passion and resentment natural to men who have received very bad usage.

I believe no such thing, answered Crito, but have often observed those of his sect run into two faults of conversation, declaiming and bantering, just as the tragic or the comic humour prevails. Sometimes they work themselves into high passions, and are frightened at spectres of their own raising. In those fits every country curate passes for an inquisitor. At other times they affect a sly facetious manner, making use of hints and allusions, expressing little, insinuating much, and upon the whole seeming to divert themselves with the subject and their adversaries. But, if you would know their opinions, you must make them speak out and keep close to the point. Persecution for free-thinking is a topic they are apt to enlarge on, though without any just cause, every one being at full liberty to think what he pleases, there being no such thing in England that I know as persecution for opinion, sentiment, or thought. But in every country, I suppose, some care is taken to restrain petulant speech, and, whatever men's inward thoughts may be, to discourage an outward contempt of what the public esteemeth sacred[3]. Whether this care in England hath of late been so excessive as to distress the subject of this once free and easy government, whether the free-thinkers can truly complain of any hardship upon the score of

[3] Cf. Berkeley's *Discourse addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority.*

conscience or opinion, you will better be able to judge, when you hear from themselves an account of the numbers, progress, and notions of their sect; which I doubt not they will communicate fully and freely, provided nobody present seem shocked or offended: for in that case it is possible good manners may put them upon some reserve.

Oh! said Euphranor, I am never angry with any man for his opinion: whether he be Jew, Turk, or Idolator, he may speak his mind freely to me without fear of offending. I should even be glad to hear what he hath to say, provided he saith it in an ingenuous candid manner. Whoever digs in the mine of truth I look on as my fellow-labourer; but if, while I am taking true pains, he diverts himself with teasing me, and flinging dust in mine eyes, I shall soon be tired of him.

5. In the meantime, Alciphron and Lysicles, having despatched what they went about, returned to us. Lysicles sat down where he had been before. But Alciphron stood over against us, with his arms folded across, and his head reclined on the left shoulder, in the posture of a man meditating. We sat silent, not to disturb his thoughts; and after two or three minutes he uttered these words—Oh truth! oh liberty! After which he remained musing as before.

Upon this Euphranor took the freedom to interrupt him. Alciphron, said he, it is not fair to spend your time in soliloquies. The conversation of learned and knowing men is rarely to be met with in this corner, and the opportunity you have put into my hands I value too much not to make the best use of it.

Alc. Are you then in earnest a votary of truth, and is it possible you should bear the liberty of a fair inquiry?

Euph. It is what I desire of all things.

Alc. What! upon every subject? upon the notions you first sucked in with your milk, and which have been ever since nursed by parents, pastors, tutors, religious assemblies, books of devotion, and such methods of prepossessing men's minds?

Euph. I love information upon all subjects that come in my way, and especially upon those that are most important.

Alc. If then you are in earnest, hold fair and stand firm, while I probe your prejudices and extirpate your principles.

Dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.

Having said thus, Alciphron knit his brows and made a short pause, after which he proceeded in the following manner:—

If we are at the pains to dive and penetrate into the bottom of things, and analyse opinions into their first principles, we shall find that those opinions which are thought of greatest consequence have the slightest original, being derived either from the casual customs of the country where we live, or from early instruction instilled into our tender minds, before we are able to discern between right and wrong, true and false. The vulgar (by whom I understand all those who do not make a free use of their reason) are apt to take these prejudices for things sacred and unquestionable, believing them to be imprinted on the hearts of men by God Himself, or conveyed by revelation from heaven, or to carry with them so great light and evidence as must force an assent without any inquiry or examination. Thus the shallow vulgar have their heads furnished with sundry conceits, principles, and doctrines, religious, moral, and political, all which they maintain with a zeal proportionable to their want of reason. On the other hand, those who duly employ their faculties in the search of truth, take especial care to weed out of their minds, and extirpate all such notions or prejudices as were planted in them before they arrived at the free and entire use of reason. This difficult task hath been successfully performed by our modern free-thinkers, who have not only dissected with great sagacity the received systems, and traced every established prejudice to the fountain-head, the true and genuine motives of assent: but also, having been able to embrace in one comprehensive view the several parts and ages of the world, they observed a wonderful variety of customs and rites, of institutions religious and civil, of notions and opinions very unlike, and even contrary one to another—a certain sign they cannot all be true. And yet they are all maintained by their several partisans with the same positive air and warm zeal; and, if examined, will be found to bottom on one and the same foundation, the strength of prejudice. By the help of these remarks and discoveries, they have broke through the bands of popular custom, and, having freed themselves from imposture, do now generously lend a hand to their fellow-subjects, to lead them into the same paths of light and liberty. Thus, gentlemen, I have given you a summary account of the views and endeavours of those men who are called

free-thinkers. If, in the course of what I have said, or shall say hereafter, there be some things contrary to your preconceived opinions, and therefore shocking and disagreeable, you will pardon the freedom and plainness of a philosopher, and consider that, whatever displeasure I give you of that kind, I do it in strict regard to truth, and obedience to your own commands. I am very sensible that eyes long kept in the dark cannot bear a sudden view of noonday light, but must be brought to it by degrees. It is for this reason the ingenious gentlemen of our profession are accustomed to proceed gradually, beginning with those prejudices to which men have the least attachment, and thence proceeding to undermine the rest by slow and insensible degrees, till they have demolished the whole fabric of human folly and superstition. But the little time I can propose to spend here obligeth me to take a shorter course, and be more direct and plain than possibly may be thought to suit with prudence and good manners.

Upon this, we assured him, he was at full liberty to speak his mind of things, persons, and opinions, without the least reserve.

It is a liberty, replied Alciphron, that we free-thinkers are equally willing to give and take. We love to call things by their right names, and cannot endure that truth should suffer through complaisance. Let us, therefore, lay it down for a preliminary, that no offence be taken at anything whatsoever shall be said on either side. To which we all agreed.

6. In order then, said Alciphron, to find out the truth, we will suppose that I am bred up, for instance, in the Church of England. When I come to maturity of judgment, and reflect on the particular worship and opinions of this Church, I do not remember when or by what means they first took possession of my mind, but there I find them from time immemorial. Then, casting an eye on the education of children, from whence I can make a judgment of my own, I observe they are instructed in religious matters before they can reason about them; and, consequently, that all such instruction is nothing else but filling the tender mind of a child with prejudices. I do, therefore, reject all those religious notions, which I consider as the other follies of my childhood. I am confirmed in this way of thinking when I look abroad into the world, where I observe Papists, and several sects of Dissenters,

which do all agree in a general profession of belief in Christ, but differ vastly one from another in the particulars of faith and worship. I then enlarge my views so as to take in Jews and Mahometans, between whom and the Christians I perceive, indeed, some small agreement in the belief of one God; but then they have each their distinct laws and revelations, for which they express the same regard. But, extending my view still further to heathenish and idolatrous nations, I discover an endless variety, not only in particular opinions and modes of worship, but even in the very notion of a Deity, wherein they widely differ one from another, and from all the forementioned sects. Upon the whole, instead of truth simple and uniform, I perceive nothing but discord, opposition, and wild pretensions, all springing from the same source, to wit, the prejudice of education. From such reasonings and reflections as these, thinking men have concluded that all religions are alike false and fabulous. One is a Christian, another a Jew, a third a Mahometan, a fourth an idolatrous Gentile, but all from one and the same reason—because they happen to be bred up each in his respective sect. In the same manner, therefore, as each of these contending parties condemns the rest, so an unprejudiced stander-by will condemn and reject them altogether, observing, that they all draw their origin from the same fallacious principle, and are carried on by the same artifice, to answer the same ends of the priest and the magistrate.

7. *Euph.* You hold then that the magistrate concurs with the priest in imposing on the people?

Alc. I do; and so must every one who considers things in a true light. For, you must know the magistrate's principal aim is to keep the people under him in awe. Now, the public eye restrains men from open offences against the laws and government. But, to prevent secret transgressions, a magistrate finds it expedient that men should believe there is an eye of Providence watching over their private actions and designs. And, to intimidate those who might otherwise be drawn into crimes by the prospect of pleasure and profit, he gives them to understand that whoever escapes punishment in this life will be sure to find it in the next; and that so heavy and lasting as infinitely to overbalance the pleasure and profit accruing from his crimes. Hence,

the belief of a God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments have been esteemed useful engines of government. And, to the end that these notional airy doctrines might make a sensible impression, and be retained on the minds of men, skilful rulers have, in several of the civilized nations of the earth, devised temples, sacrifices, churches, rites, ceremonies, habits, music, prayer, preaching, and the like spiritual trumpery, whereby the priest maketh temporal gains, and the magistrate findeth his account in frightening and subduing the people. This is the original of the combination between Church and State, of religion by law established, of rights, immunities, and incomes of priests all over the world: there being no government but would have you fear God, that you may honour the king or civil power. And you will ever observe that politic princes keep up a good understanding with their clergy, to the end that they in return, by inculcating religion and loyalty into the minds of the people, may render them tame, timorous, and slavish.

Crito and I heard this discourse of Alciphron with the utmost attention, though without any appearance of surprise, there being, indeed, nothing in it to us new or unexpected. But Euphranor, who had never before been present at such conversation, could not help shewing some astonishment; which Lysicles observing, asked him with a lively air, how he liked Alciphron's lecture. It is, said he, the first I believe that you ever heard of the kind, and requireth a strong stomach to digest it.

Euph. I will own to you that my digestion is none of the quickest; but it hath sometimes, by degrees, been able to master things which at first appeared indigestible. At present I admire the free spirit and eloquence of Alciphron; but, to speak the truth, I am rather astonished than convinced of the truth of his opinions. How! (said he, turning to Alciphron) is it then possible you should not believe the being of a God?

Alc. To be plain with you, I do not.

8. But this is what I foresaw—a flood of light let in at once upon the mind being apt to dazzle and disorder, rather than enlighten it. Was I not pinched in time, the regular way would be to have begun with the circumstantials of religion; next to have attacked the mysteries of Christianity; after that proceeded to the practical

doctrines; and in the last place to have extirpated that which of all other religious prejudices, being the first taught and basis of the rest, hath taken the deepest root in our minds—I mean, the belief of a God. I do not wonder it sticks with you, having known several very ingenious men who found it difficult to free themselves from this prejudice.

Euph. All men have not the same alacrity and vigour in thinking; for my own part, I find it a hard matter to keep pace with you.

Alc. To help you, I will go a little way back, and resume the thread of my reasoning. First, I must acquaint you that, having applied my mind to contemplate the idea of Truth, I discovered it to be of a stable, permanent, and uniform nature; not various and changeable, like modes or fashions, and things depending on fancy. In the next place, having observed several sects and subdivisions of sects espousing very different and contrary opinions, and yet all professing Christianity, I rejected those points wherein they differed, retaining only that which was agreed to by all, and so became a *Latitudinarian.* Having afterwards, upon a more enlarged view of things, perceived that Christians, Jews, and Mahometans had each their different systems of faith, agreeing only in the belief of one God, I became a *Deist.* Lastly, extending my view to all the other various nations which inhabit this globe, and finding they agreed in no one point of faith, but differed one from another, as well as from the forementioned sects, even in the notion of a God, in which there is as great diversity as in the methods of worship, I thereupon became an *Atheist:* it being my opinion that a man of courage and sense should follow his argument wherever it leads him, and that nothing is more ridiculous than to be a free-thinker by halves. I approve the man who makes thorough work, and, not content with lopping off the branches, extirpates the very root from which they sprung.

9. Atheism therefore, that bugbear of women and fools, is the very top and perfection of free-thinking[4]. It is the grand *arcanum* to which a true genius naturally riseth, by a certain climax or gradation of thought, and without which he can never possess his

[4] Cf. *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, sect. 1—8, where it is maintained that Atheism is the goal of the prevalent deistical free-thinking.

soul in absolute liberty and repose. For your thorough conviction in this main article, do but examine the notion of a God with the same freedom that you would other prejudices. Trace it to the fountain-head, and you shall not find that you had it by any of your senses—the only true means of discovering what is real and substantial in nature: you will find it lying amongst other old lumber in some obscure corner of the imagination, the proper receptacle of visions, fancies, and prejudices of all kinds; and if you are more attached to this than the rest, it is only because it is the oldest. This is all, take my word for it, and not mine only but that of many more the most ingenious men of the age, who, I can assure you, think as I do on the subject of a Deity. Though some of them hold it proper to proceed with more reserve in declaring to the world their opinion in this particular than in most others. And, it must be owned, there are still too many in England who retain a foolish prejudice against the name of atheist. But it lessens every day among the better sort; and when it is quite worn out our free-thinkers may then (and not till then) be said to have given the finishing stroke to religion; it being evident that, so long as the existence of God is believed, religion must subsist in some shape or other. But, the root being once plucked up, the scions which shoot from it will of course wither and decay. Such are all those whimsical notions of conscience, duty, principle, and the like, which fill a man's head with scruples, awe him with fears, and make him a more thorough slave than the horse he rides. A man had better a thousand times be hunted by bailiffs or messengers than haunted by these spectres, which embarrass and embitter all his pleasures, creating the most real and sore servitude upon earth. But the free-thinker, with a vigorous flight of thought, breaks through those airy springes, and asserts his original independency. Others indeed may talk, and write, and fight about liberty, and make an outward pretence to it; but the free-thinker alone is truly free.

Alciphron having ended this discourse with an air of triumph, Euphranor spoke to him in the following manner:—

You make clear work. The gentlemen of your profession are, it seems, admirable weeders. You have rooted up a world of notions: I should be glad to see what fine things you have planted in their stead.

Alc. Have patience, good Euphranor. I will shew you, in the first place, that whatever was sound and good we leave untouched, and encourage it to grow in the mind of man. And, secondly, I will shew you what excellent things we have planted in it. You must know then that, pursuing our close and severe scrutiny, we do at last arrive at something solid and real, in which all mankind agree, to wit, the appetites, passions, and senses: these are founded in nature, are real, have real objects, and are attended with real and substantial pleasures;—food, drink, sleep, and the like animal enjoyments being what all men like and love. And, if we extend our view to other kinds of animals, we shall find them all agree in this, that they have certain natural appetites and senses, in the gratifying and satisfying of which they are constantly employed. Now, these real natural good things, which include nothing of notion or fancy, we are so far from destroying, that we do all we can to cherish and improve them. According to us, every wise man looks upon himself, or his own bodily existence in this present world, as the centre and ultimate end of all his actions and regards. He considers his appetites as natural guides, directing to his proper good, his passions and senses as the natural true means of enjoying this good. Hence, he endeavours to keep his appetites in high relish, his passions and senses strong and lively, and to provide the greatest quantity and variety of real objects suited to them, which he studieth to enjoy by all possible means, and in the highest perfection imaginable. And the man who can do this without restraint, remorse, or fear is as happy as any other animal whatsoever, or as his nature is capable of being. Thus I have given you a succinct view of the principles, discoveries, and tenets of the select spirits of this enlightened age.

10. Crito remarked, that Alciphron had spoken his mind with great clearness.

Yes, replied Euphranor, we are obliged to the gentleman for letting us at once into the tenets of his sect. But, if I may be allowed to speak my mind, Alciphron, though in compliance with my own request, hath given me no small uneasiness.

You need, said Alciphron, make no apology for speaking freely what you think to one who professeth himself a free-thinker.

I should be sorry to make one, whom I meant to oblige, uneasy. Pray let me know wherein I have offended.

I am half ashamed, replied Euphranor, to own that I, who am no great genius, have a weakness incidental to little ones. I would say that I have favourite opinions, which you represent to be errors and prejudices. For instance, the Immortality of the Soul is a notion I am fond of, as what supports the mind with a very pleasing prospect. And, if it be an error, I should perhaps be of Tully's mind, who in that case professed he should be sorry to know the truth, acknowledging no sort of obligation to certain philosophers in his days, who taught the soul of man was mortal[5]. They were, it seems, predecessors to those who are now called free-thinkers; which name being too general and indefinite—inasmuch as it comprehends all those who think for themselves, whether they agree in opinion with these gentlemen or no—it should not seem amiss to assign them a specific appellation or peculiar name, whereby to distinguish them from other philosophers, at least in our present conference. For, I cannot bear to argue against free-thinking and free-thinkers.

Alc. In the eyes of a wise man words are of small moment. We do not think truth attached to a name.

Euph. If you please then, to avoid confusion, let us call your sect by the same name that Tully (who understood the force of language) bestowed upon them.

Alc. With all my heart. Pray what may that name be?

Euph. Why, he calls them *minute philosophers*[6].

Right, said Crito, the modern free-thinkers are the very same with those Cicero called minute philosophers, which name admirably suits them, they being a sort of sect which diminish all the most valuable things, the thoughts, views, and hopes of men; all the knowledge, notions, and theories of the mind they reduce to sense; human nature they contract and degrade to the narrow low standard of animal life, and assign us only a small pittance of time instead of immortality.

Alciphron very gravely remarked that the gentlemen of his sect had done no injury to man, and that, if he be a little, short-lived, contemptible animal, it was not their saying it made

[5] Cicero, *Tuscul. Quæst.* I. § 24.
[6] Cicero, *De Finibus*, I. § 18; *De Senectute*, § 86; *De Divinatione*, I. § 62.

him so: and they were no more to blame for whatever defects they discover than a faithful glass for making the wrinkles which it only shows. As to what you observe, said he, of those we now call free-thinkers having been anciently termed *minute philosophers*, it is my opinion this appellation might be derived from their considering things minutely, and not swallowing them in the gross, as other men are used to do. Besides, we all know the best eyes are necessary to discern the minutest objects: it seems, therefore, that minute philosophers might have been so called from their distinguished perspicacity.

Euph. O Alciphron! these minute philosophers (since that is their true name) are a sort of pirates who plunder all that come in their way[7]. I consider myself as a man left stripped and desolate on a bleak beach.

11. But who are these profound and learned men that of late years have demolished the whole fabric which lawgivers, philosophers, and divines had been erecting for so many ages?

Lysicles, hearing these words, smiled, and said he believed Euphranor had figured to himself philosophers in square caps and long gowns: but, thanks to these happy times, the reign of pedantry was over. Our philosophers, said he, are of a different kind from those awkward students who think to come at knowledge by poring on dead languages and old authors, or by sequestering themselves from the cares of the world to meditate in solitude and retirement. They are the best bred men of the age, men who know the world, men of pleasure, men of fashion, and fine gentlemen.

Euph. I have some small notion of the people you mention, but should never have taken them for philosophers.

Cri. Nor would any one else till of late. The world it seems was long under a mistake about the way to knowledge, thinking it lay through a tedious course of academical education and study. But, among the discoveries of the present age, one of the principal is the finding out that such a method doth rather retard and obstruct than promote knowledge.

Alc. Academical study may be comprised in two points, reading and meditation. Their reading is chiefly employed on ancient

[7] Cf. sect. 13.

authors in dead languages: so that a great part of their time is spent in learning words; which, when they have mastered with infinite pains, what do they get by it but old and obsolete notions, that are now quite exploded and out of use? Then, as to their meditations, what can they possibly be good for? He that wants the proper materials of thought may think and meditate for ever to no purpose: those cobwebs spun by scholars out of their own brains being alike unserviceable, either for use or ornament. Proper ideas or materials are only to be got by frequenting good company. I know several gentlemen who, since their appearance in the world, have spent as much time in rubbing off the rust and pedantry of a college education as they had done before in acquiring it.

Lysicles. I will undertake, a lad of fourteen, bred in the modern way, shall make a better figure, and be more considered in any drawing-room or assembly of polite people, than one at four-and-twenty, who hath lain by a long time at school and college. He shall say better things in a better manner, and be more liked by good judges.

Euph. Where doth he pick up all this improvement?

Cri. Where our grave ancestors would never have looked for it —in a drawing-room, a coffee-house, a chocolate-house, at the tavern, or groom-porter's. In these and the like fashionable places of resort, it is the custom for polite persons to speak freely on all subjects, religious, moral, or political. So that a young gentleman who frequents them is in the way of hearing many instructive lectures, seasoned with wit and raillery, and uttered with spirit. Three or four sentences from a man of quality, spoken with a good air, make more impression and convey more knowledge than a dozen dissertations in a dry academical way.

Euph. There is then no method, or course of studies, in those places?

Lys. None but an easy free conversation, which takes in everything that offers, without any rule or design.

Euph. I always thought that some order was necessary to attain any useful degree of knowledge; that haste and confusion begat a conceited ignorance; that to make our advances sure, they should be gradual, and those points first learned which might cast a light on what was to follow.

Alc. So long as learning was to be obtained only by that slow formal course of study, few of the better sort knew much of it: but, now it has grown an amusement, our young gentry and nobility imbibe it insensibly amidst their diversions, and make a considerable progress.

Euph. Hence probably the great number of minute philosophers.

Cri. It is to this that sect is owing for so many ingenious proficients of both sexes. You may now commonly see (what no former age ever saw) a young lady, or a *petit maitre*, nonplus a divine, or an old-fashioned gentleman, who hath read many a Greek and Latin author, and spent much time in hard methodical study.

Euph. It should seem then that method, exactness, and industry are a disadvantage.

Here Alciphron, turning to Lysicles, said he could make the point very clear, if Euphranor had any notion of painting.

Euph. I never saw a first-rate picture in my life, but have a tolerable collection of prints, and have seen some good drawings.

Alc. You know then the difference between the Dutch and Italian manner?

Euph. I have some notion of it.

Alc. Suppose now a drawing finished by the nice and laborious touches of a Dutch pencil, and another off-hand scratched out in the free manner of a great Italian master. The Dutch piece, which hath cost so much pains and time, will be exact indeed, but without that force, spirit, and grace which appear in the other, and are the effects of an easy, free pencil. Do but apply this, and the point will be clear.

Euph. Pray inform me, did those great Italian masters begin and proceed in their art without any choice of method or subject, and always draw with the same ease and freedom? Or did they observe some method, beginning with simple and elementary parts, an eye, a nose, a finger, which they drew with great pains and care, often drawing the same thing, in order to draw it correctly, and so proceeding with patience and industry, till, after a considerable length of time, they arrive at the free masterly manner you speak of. If this were the case, I leave you to make the application.

Alc. You may dispute the matter if you please. But a man of parts is one thing, and a pedant another. Pains and method may

do for some sort of people. A man must be a long time kindling wet straw into a vile smothering flame, but spirits blaze out at once.

Euph. The minute philosophers have, it seems, better parts than other men, which qualifies them for a different education.

Alc. Tell me, Euphranor, what is it that gives one man a better mien than another; more politeness in dress, speech, and motion? Nothing but frequenting good company. By the same means men get insensibly a delicate taste, a refined judgment, a certain politeness in thinking and expressing one's self. No wonder if you countrymen are strangers to the advantage of polite conversation, which constantly keeps the mind awake and active, exercising its faculties, and calling forth all its strength and spirit, on a thousand different occasions and subjects that never came in the way of a book-worm in a college, any more than of a ploughman.

Cri. Hence those lively faculties, that quickness of apprehension, that slyness of ridicule, that egregious talent of wit and humour which distinguish the gentlemen of your profession.

Euph. It should seem then that your sect is made up of what you call fine gentlemen.

Lys. Not altogether, for we have among us some contemplative spirits of a coarser education, who, from observing the behaviour and proceedings of apprentices, watermen, porters, and the assemblies of rabble in the streets, have arrived at a profound knowledge of human nature, and made great discoveries about the principles, springs, and motives of moral actions. These have demolished the received systems, and done a world of good in the city.

Alc. I tell you we have men of all sorts and professions, plodding citizens, thriving stock-jobbers, skilful men in business, polite courtiers, gallant men of the army; but our chief strength, and flower of the flock, are those promising young men who have the advantage of a modern education. These are the growing hopes of our sect, by whose credit and influence in a few years we expect to see those great things accomplished that we have in view.

Euph. I could never have imagined your sect so considerable.

Alc. There are in England many honest folk as much in the dark about these matters as yourselves.

12. To judge of the prevailing opinion among people of fashion, by what a senator saith in the house, a judge upon the bench, or

a priest in the pulpit, who all speak according to law, that is to the reverend prejudices of our forefathers, would be wrong. You should go into good company, and mind what men of parts and breeding say, those who are best heard and most admired, as well in public places of resort as in private visits. He only who hath these opportunities can know our real strength, our numbers, and the figure that we make.

Euph. By your account there must be many minute philosophers among the men of rank and fortune.

Alc. Take my word for it, not a few; and they do much contribute to the spreading our notions. For, he who knows the world must observe that fashions constantly descend. It is therefore the right way to propagate an opinion from the upper end. Not to say that the patronage of such men is an encouragement to our authors.

Euph. It seems, then, you have authors among you.

Lys. That we have, several, and those very great men, who have obliged the world with many useful and profound discoveries.

Cri. Moschon, for instance, hath proved that man and beast are really of the same nature: that consequently a man need only indulge his senses and appetites to be as happy as a brute. Gorgias hath gone further, demonstrating man to be a piece of clock-work or machine; and that thought or reason is the same thing as the impulse of one ball against another. Cimon hath made noble use of these discoveries, proving, as clearly as any proposition in mathematics, that conscience is a whim, and morality a prejudice; and that a man is no more accountable for his actions than a clock is for striking. Tryphon hath written irrefragably on the usefulness of vice. Thrasenor hath confuted the foolish prejudice men had against atheism, shewing that a republic of atheists might live very happily together. Demylas hath made a jest of loyalty, and convinced the world there is nothing in it: to him and another philosopher of the same stamp this age is indebted for discovering that public spirit is an idle enthusiasm, which seizeth only on weak minds[8]. It would be endless to recount the discoveries made by writers of this sect.

Lys. But the masterpiece and finishing stroke is a learned

[8] Cf. *Maxims concerning Patriotism*, sect. 26; *Siris*, sect. 331. So also Butler, in his *Sermons*.

anecdote of our great Diagoras, containing a demonstration against the being of God: which it is conceived the public is not yet ripe for[9]. But I am assured by some judicious friends who have seen it that it is as clear as daylight, and will do a world of good, at one blow demolishing the whole system of religion. These discoveries are published by our philosophers, sometimes in just volumes, but often in pamphlets and loose papers for their readier conveyance through the kingdom. And to them must be ascribed that absolute and independent freedom which groweth so fast to the terror of all bigots. Even the dull and ignorant begin to open their eyes, and be influenced by the example and authority of so many ingenious men.

Euph. It should seem by this account that your sect extend their discoveries beyond religion; and that loyalty to his prince and reverence for the laws are but mean things in the eye of a minute philosopher.

Lys. Very mean; we are too wise to think there is anything sacred either in king or constitution, or indeed in anything else. A man of sense may perhaps seem to pay an occasional regard to his prince; but this is no more at bottom than what he pays to God, when he kneels at the sacrament to qualify himself for an office[10]. 'Fear God' and 'Honour the king' are a pair of slavish maxims, which had for a long time cramped human nature, and awed not only weak minds but even men of good understanding, till their eyes, as I observed before, were opened by our philosophers.

Euph. Methinks I can easily comprehend that when the fear of God is quite extinguished the mind must be very easy with respect to other duties, which become outward pretences and formalities, from the moment that they quit their hold upon the conscience, and conscience always supposeth the being of a God. But I still thought that Englishmen of all denominations (how widely soever they differ as to some particular points) agreed in the belief of a God, and of so much at least as is called Natural Religion.

Alc. I have already told you my own opinion of those matters, and what I know to be the opinion of many more.

Cri. Probably, Euphranor, by the title of Deists, which is some-

[9] Cf. 'Editor's Preface,' p. 5, and 'Advertisement,' note by Editor.
[10] Cf. Dial. III. sect. 2.

times given to minute philosophers, you have been misled to imagine they believe and worship a God according to the light of nature; but, by living among them, you may soon be convinced of the contrary. They have neither time, nor place, nor form of Divine worship; they offer neither prayers nor praises to God in public; and in their private practice shew a contempt or dislike even of the duties of Natural Religion. For instance, the saying grace before and after meals is a plain point of natural worship, and was once universally practised[11]; but in proportion as this sect prevailed it hath been laid aside, not only by the minute philosophers themselves, who would be infinitely ashamed of such a weakness as to beg God's blessing or give God thanks for their daily food, but also by others who are afraid of being thought fools by the minute philosophers.

Euph. Is it possible that men who really believe a God should yet decline paying so easy and reasonable a duty for fear of incurring the contempt of atheists?

Cri. I tell you there are many who, believing in their hearts the truth of religion, are yet afraid or ashamed to own it, lest they should forfeit their reputation with those who have the good luck to pass for great wits and men of genius.

Alc. O Euphranor, we must make allowance for Crito's prejudice: he is a worthy gentleman, and means well. But doth it not look like prejudice to ascribe the respect that is paid our ingenious free-thinkers rather to good luck than to merit?

Euph. I acknowledge their merit to be very wonderful, and that those authors must needs be great men who are able to prove such paradoxes: for example, that so knowing a man as a minute philosopher should be a mere machine, or at best no better than a brute.

Alc. It is a true maxim—That a man should think with the learned, and speak with the vulgar. I should be loath to place a gentleman of merit in such a light, before prejudiced or ignorant men. The tenets of our philosophy have this in common with many other truths in metaphysics, geometry, astronomy, and natural philosophy—that vulgar ears cannot bear them. All our discoveries and notions are in themselves true and certain; but they are at present known only to the better sort, and would

[11] This passage is ridiculed by the 'Country Clergyman,' in his *Remarks on the Minute Philosopher*, pp. 38—40.

sound strange and odd among the vulgar. But this, it is to be hoped, will wear off with time.

Euph. I do not wonder that vulgar minds should be startled at the notions of your philosophy.

Cri. Truly a very curious sort of philosophy, and much to be admired!

13. The profound thinkers of this way have taken a direct contrary course to all the great philosophers of former ages, who made it their endeavour to raise and refine human-kind, and remove it as far as possible from the brute; to moderate and subdue men's appetites; to remind them of the dignity of their nature; to awaken and improve their superior faculties, and direct them to the noblest objects; to possess men's minds with a high sense of the Divinity, of the Supreme Good, and the Immortality of the Soul. They took great pains to strengthen the obligations to virtue; and upon all those subjects have wrought out noble theories, and treated with singular force of reason. But it seems our minute philosophers act the reverse of all other wise and thinking men; it being their end and aim to erase the principles of all that is great and good from the mind of man, to unhinge all order of civil life, to undermine the foundations of morality, and, instead of improving and ennobling our natures, to bring us down to the maxims and way of thinking of the most uneducated and barbarous nations, and even to degrade human-kind to a level with brute beasts. And all the while they would pass upon the world for men of deep knowledge. But, in effect, what is all this negative knowledge better than downright savage ignorance? That there is no Providence, no Spirit, no Future State, no Moral Duty: truly a fine system for an honest man to own, or an ingenious man to value himself upon!

Alciphron, who heard this discourse with some uneasiness, very gravely replied:—Disputes are not to be decided by the weight of authority, but by the force of reason. You may pass, indeed, general reflections on our notions, and call them brutal and barbarous if you please: but it is such brutality and such barbarism as few could have attained to if men of the greatest genius had not broken the ice, there being nothing more difficult than to get the better of education, and conquer old prejudices.

To remove and cast off a heap of rubbish that has been gathering upon the soul from our very infancy requires great courage and great strength of faculties. Our philosophers, therefore, do well deserve the name of *esprits forts*, *men of strong heads*, *free-thinkers*, and such like appellations, betokening great force and liberty of mind. It is very possible the heroic labours of these men may be represented (for what is not capable of misrepresentation?) as a piratical plundering, and stripping the mind of its wealth and ornaments[12], when it is in truth divesting it only of its prejudices, and reducing it to its untainted original state of nature. Oh nature! the genuine beauty of pure nature!

Euph. You seem very much taken with the beauty of nature. Be pleased to tell me, Alciphron, what those things are which you esteem *natural*, or by what mark I may know them.

14. *Alc.* For a thing to be natural[13], for instance, to the mind of man, it must appear originally therein; it must be universally in all men; it must be invariably the same in all nations and ages. These limitations of original, universal, and invariable exclude all those notions found in the human mind which are the effect of custom and education. The case is the same with respect to all other species of beings. A cat, for example, hath a natural inclination to pursue a mouse, because it agrees with the forementioned marks. But, if a cat be taught to play tricks, you will not say those tricks are natural. For the same reason, if upon a plum-tree peaches and apricots are engrafted, nobody will say they are the natural growth of the plum-tree.

Euph. But to return to *man:* it seems you allow those things alone to be natural to him which show themselves upon his first entrance into the world; to wit, the senses, and such passions and appetites as are discovered upon the first application of their respective objects.

Alc. That is my opinion.

[12] Cf. sect. 10.

[13] The *marks* for distinguishing the constituent principles of what has been called the moral or practical reason in human nature are discussed in this and the following section. Are those beliefs only to be esteemed 'natural,' it is asked, which show themselves in infancy, in all men, and in the same form in all; and must belief in Moral Government and in a Future Life be pronounced a prejudice due to casual custom, if we find that, unlike the bodily appetites, it is of gradual growth, and not developed at all in some men?—Cf. Berkeley's *Discourse of Passive Obedience*, sect. 4—12.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, if from a young apple-tree, after a certain period of time, there should shoot forth leaves, blossoms, and apples; would you deny these things to be natural, because they did not discover and display themselves in the tender bud?

Alc. I would not.

Euph. And suppose that in a man, after a certain season, the appetite of lust, or the faculty of reason shall shoot forth, open, and display themselves, as leaves and blossoms do in a tree; would you, therefore, deny them to be natural to him, because they did not appear in his original infancy?

Alc. I acknowledge I would not.

Euph. It seems, therefore, that the first mark of a thing's being natural to the mind was not warily laid down by you; to wit, that it should appear originally in it.

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. Again, inform me, Alciphron, whether you do not think it natural for an orange-plant tree to produce oranges?

Alc. I do.

Euph. But plant it in the north end of Great Britain, and it shall with care produce, perhaps, a good salad; in the southern parts of the same island, it may, with much pains and culture, thrive and produce indifferent fruit; but in Portugal or Naples it will produce much better with little or no pains. Is this true or not?

Alc. It is true.

Euph. The plant being the same in all places doth not produce the same fruit—sun, soil, and cultivation making a difference.

Alc. I grant it.

Euph. And, since the case is, you say, the same with respect to all species, why may we not conclude, by a parity of a reason, that things may be natural to human-kind, and yet neither found in all men, nor invariably the same where they are found?

Alc. Hold, Euphranor, you must explain yourself further. I shall not be over hasty in my concessions.

Lys. You are in the right, Alciphron, to stand upon your guard. I do not like these ensnaring questions.

Euph. I desire you to make no concessions in complaisance to me, but only to tell me your opinion upon each particular, that we may understand one another, know wherein to agree, and proceed

jointly in finding out the truth. But (added Euphranor, turning to Crito and me) if the gentlemen are against a free and fair inquiry, I shall give them no further trouble.

Alc. Our opinions will stand the test. We fear no trial; proceed as you please.

Euph. It seems then that, from what you have granted, it should follow things may be natural to men, although they do not actually show themselves in all men, nor in equal perfection; there being as great difference of culture, and every other advantage, with respect to human nature, as is to be found with respect to the vegetable nature of plants, to use your own similitude;—is it so or not?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Answer me, Alciphron, do not men in all times and places, when they arrive at a certain age, express their thoughts by speech?

Alc. They do.

Euph. Should it not seem, then, that language is natural?

Alc. It should.

Euph. And yet there is a great variety of languages?

Alc. I acknowledge there is.

Euph. From all this will it not follow a thing may be natural and yet admit of variety?

Alc. I grant it will.

Euph. Should it not seem, therefore, to follow that a thing may be natural to mankind, though it have not those marks or conditions assigned; though it be not original, universal, and invariable?

Alc. It should.

Euph. And that, consequently, religious worship and civil government may be natural to man, notwithstanding they admit of sundry forms and different degrees of perfection?

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. You have granted already that reason is natural to mankind.

Alc. I have.

Euph. Whatever, therefore, is agreeable to reason is agreeable to the nature of man.

Alc. It is.

Euph. Will it not follow from hence that truth and virtue are natural to man?

Alc. Whatever is reasonable I admit to be natural.

Euph. And, as those fruits which grow from the most generous and mature stock, in the choicest soil, and with the best culture, are most esteemed; even so ought we not to think those sublime truths, which are the fruits of mature thought, and have been rationally deduced by men of the best and most improved understandings, to be the choicest productions of the rational nature of man? And, if so, being in fact reasonable, natural, and true, they ought not to be esteemed unnatural whims, errors of education, and groundless prejudices, because they are raised and forwarded by manuring and cultivating our tender minds, because they take early root, and sprout forth betimes by the care and diligence of our instructors.

Alc. Agreed, provided still they may be rationally deduced: but to take this for granted of what men vulgarly call the Truths of Morality and Religion, would be begging the question.

Euph. You are in the right: I do not, therefore, take for granted that they are rationally deduced. I only suppose that, if they are, they must be allowed natural to man; or, in other words, agreeable to, and growing from, the most excellent and peculiar part of human nature.

Alc. I have nothing to object to this.

Euph. What shall we think then of your former assertions—that nothing is *natural* to man but what may be found in all men, in all nations and ages of the world; that, to obtain a genuine view of human nature, we must extirpate all the effects of education and instruction, and regard only the senses, appetites, and passions, which are to be found originally in all mankind; that, therefore, the notion of a God can have no foundation in nature, as not being originally in the mind, nor the same in all men? Be pleased to reconcile these things with your late concessions, which the force of truth seems to have extorted from you.

15. *Alc.* Tell me, Euphranor, whether truth be not one and the same, uniform, invariable thing: and, if so, whether the many different and inconsistent notions which men entertain of God and duty be not a plain proof there is no truth in them?

Euph. That truth is constant and uniform I freely own, and that consequently opinions repugnant to each other cannot be true: but I think it will not hence follow they are all alike false. If, among various opinions about the same thing, one be grounded on clear and evident reasons, that is to be thought true, and others only so far as they consist with it. Reason is the same, and rightly applied will lead to the same conclusions, in all times and places. Socrates, two thousand years ago, seems to have reasoned himself into the same notion of a God which is entertained by the philosophers of our days, if you will allow that name to any who are not atheists. And the remark of Confucius, that a man should guard in his youth against lust, in manhood against faction, and in old age against covetousness, is as current morality in Europe as in China.

Alc. But still it would be a satisfaction if all men thought the same way, difference of opinions implying uncertainty.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, what you take to be the cause of a lunar eclipse.

Alc. The shadow of the earth interposing between the sun and moon.

Euph. Are you sure of this?

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Euph. Are all mankind agreed in this truth?

Alc. By no means. Ignorant and barbarous people assign different ridiculous causes of this appearance.

Euph. It seems, then, there are different opinions about the nature of an eclipse.

Alc. There are.

Euph. And nevertheless one of these opinions is true.

Alc. It is.

Euph. Diversity, therefore, of opinions about a thing, doth not hinder that the thing may be, and one of the opinions concerning it may be true.

Alc. I acknowledge it.

Euph. It should seem, therefore, that your argument against the belief of a God from the variety of opinions about his nature is not conclusive. Nor do I see how you can conclude against the truth of any moral or religious tenet, from the various opinions of men upon the same subject. Might not a man as well argue, that

no historical account of a matter of fact can be true, when different relations are given of it? Or, may we not as well infer that, because the several sects of philosophy maintain different opinions, none of them can be in the right, not even the *minute philosophers* themselves?

During this conversation Lysicles seemed uneasy, like one that wished in his heart there was no God. Alciphron, said he, methinks you sit by very tamely, while Euphranor saps the foundation of our tenets.

Be of good courage, replied Alciphron: a skilful gamester has been known to ruin his adversary by yielding him some advantage at first. I am glad, said he, turning to Euphranor, that you are drawn in to argue, and make your appeals to reason. For my part, wherever reason leads I shall not be afraid to follow. Know then, Euphranor, that I freely give up what you now contend for. I do not value the success of a few crude notions thrown out in a loose discourse, any more than the Turks do the loss of that vile infantry they place in the front of their armies, for no other end but to waste the powder, and blunt the swords of their enemies. Be assured I have in reserve a body of other guess arguments, which I am ready to produce. I will undertake to prove——

Euph. O Alciphron! I do not doubt your faculty of proving. But, before I put you to the trouble of any farther proofs, I should be glad to know whether the notions of your minute philosophy are worth proving. I mean, whether they are of use and service to mankind.

16. *Alc.* As to that, give me leave to tell you, a thing may be useful to one man's views, and not to another's: but truth is truth, whether useful or not, and must not be measured by the convenience of this or that man, or party of men.

Euph. But is not the general good of mankind[13] to be regarded as a rule and measure of moral truths—of all such truths as direct or influence the moral actions of men?

Alc. That point is not clear to me. I know, indeed, that legislators, and divines, and politicians have always alleged, that it is necessary to the well-being of mankind that they should be kept

[13] Cf. *Discourse of Passive Obedience*, which should be compared with this and the two following Dialogues, as illustrating the ethical theory of Berkeley.

in awe by the slavish notions of religion and morality. But, granting all this, how will it prove these notions to be true? Convenience is one thing, and truth is another. A genuine philosopher, therefore, will overlook all advantages, and consider only truth itself as such.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, is your genuine philosopher a wise man, or a fool?

Alc. Without question, the wisest of men.

Euph. Which is to be thought the wise man, he who acts with design, or he who acts at random?

Alc. He who acts with design.

Euph. Whoever acts with design, acts for some end: doth he not?

Alc. He doth.

Euph. And a wise man for a good end?

Alc. True.

Euph. And he sheweth his wisdom in making choice of fit means to obtain his end?

Alc. I acknowledge it.

Euph. By how much, therefore, the end proposed is more excellent, and by how much fitter the means employed are to obtain it, so much the wiser is the agent to be esteemed?

Alc. This seems to be true.

Euph. Can a rational agent propose a more excellent end than happiness?

Alc. He cannot.

Euph. Of good things, the greater good is most excellent?

Alc. Doubtless.

Euph. Is not the general happiness of mankind a greater good than the private happiness of one man, or of some certain men?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Is it not therefore the most excellent end?

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. Are not then those who pursue this end, by the properest methods, to be thought the wisest men?

Alc. I grant they are.

Euph. Which is a wise man governed by, wise or foolish notions?

Alc. By wise, doubtless.

Euph. It seems then to follow, that he who promotes the general well-being of mankind, by the proper necessary means, is truly wise, and acts upon wise grounds.

Alc. It should seem so.

Euph. And is not folly of an opposite nature to wisdom?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Might it not therefore be inferred, that those men are foolish who go about to unhinge such principles as have a necessary connection with the general good of mankind?

Alc. Perhaps this might be granted: but at the same time I must observe that it is in my power to deny it.

Euph. How! you will not surely deny the conclusion, when you admit the premises?

Alc. I would fain know upon what terms we argue; whether in this progress of question and answer, if a man makes a slip, it be utterly irretrievable? For, if you are on the catch to lay hold of every advantage, without allowing for surprise or inattention, I must tell you this is not the way to convince my judgment.

Euph. O Alciphron! I aim not at triumph, but at truth. You are therefore at full liberty to unravel all that hath been said, and to recover or correct any slip you have made. But then you must distinctly point it out: otherwise it will be impossible ever to arrive at any conclusion.

Alc. I agree with you upon these terms jointly to proceed in search of truth, for to that I am sincerely devoted. In the progress of our present inquiry, I was, it seems, guilty of an oversight, in acknowledging the general happiness of mankind to be a greater good than the particular happiness of one man. For in fact the individual happiness of every man alone constitutes his own entire good. The happiness of other men, making no part of mine, is not with respect to me a good: I mean a true natural good. It cannot therefore be a reasonable end to be proposed by me, in truth and nature (for I do not speak of political pretences), since no wise man will pursue an end which doth not concern him. This is the voice of nature. O nature! thou art the fountain, original, and pattern of all that is good and wise.

Euph. You would like then to follow nature, and propose her as a guide and pattern for your imitation?

Alc. Of all things.

Euph. Whence do you gather this respect for nature?

Alc. From the excellency of her productions.

Euph. In a vegetable, for instance, you say there is use and excellency; because the several parts of it are so connected and fitted to each other as to protect and nourish the whole, make the individual grow, and propagate the kind; and because in its fruits or qualities it is adapted to please the sense, or contribute to the benefit of man.

Alc. Even so.

Euph. In like manner, do you not infer the excellency of animal bodies from observing the frame and fitness of their several parts, by which they mutually conspire to the well-being of each other as well as of the whole? Do you not also observe a natural union and consent between animals of the same kind; and that even different kinds of animals have certain qualities and instincts whereby they contribute to the exercise, nourishment, and delight of each other? Even the inanimate unorganized elements seem to have an excellence relative to each other. Where was the excellency of water, if it did not cause herbs and vegetables to spring from the earth, and put forth flowers and fruits? And what would become of the beauty of the earth, if it was not warmed by the sun, moistened by water, and fanned by air? Throughout the whole system of the visible and natural world, do you not perceive a mutual connection and correspondence of parts? And is it not from hence that you frame an idea of the perfection, and order, and beauty of nature?

Alc. All this I grant.

Euph. And have not the Stoics heretofore said (who were no more bigots than you are), and did you not yourself say, this pattern of order was worthy of the imitation of rational agents?

Alc. I do not deny this to be true.

Euph. Ought we not, therefore, to infer the same union, order, and regularity in the moral world that we perceive to be in the natural?

Alc. We ought.

Euph. Should it not therefore seem to follow, that reasonable creatures were, as the philosophical Emperor[14] observes, made one for another; and, consequently, that *man* ought not to consider

[14] [M. Antonin. lib. iv.]—Author.

himself as an independent individual, whose happiness is not connected with that of other men; but rather as a part of a whole, to the common good of which he ought to conspire, and order his ways and actions suitably, if he would live according to nature?

Alc. Supposing this to be true, what then?

Euph. Will it not follow that a wise man should consider and pursue his private good, with regard to, and in conjunction with that of other men? In granting of which, you thought yourself guilty of an oversight. Though, indeed, the sympathy of pain and pleasure, and the mutual affections by which mankind are knit together have been always allowed a plain proof of this point: and though it was the constant doctrine of those who were esteemed the wisest and most thinking men among the ancients, as the Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoics; to say nothing of Christians, whom you pronounce to be an unthinking, prejudiced sort of people.

Alc. I shall not dispute this point with you.

Euph. Since, therefore, we are so far agreed, should it not seem to follow from the premises—that the belief of a God, of a future state, and of moral duties are the only wise, right, and genuine principles of human conduct, in case they have a necessary connection with the well-being of mankind? This conclusion you have been led to by your own concessions, and by the analogy of nature.

Alc. I have been drawn into it step by step through several preliminaries, which I cannot well call to mind; but one thing I observe, that you build on the necessary connection those principles have with the well-being of mankind, which is a point neither proved nor granted.

Lys. This I take to be a grand fundamental prejudice, as I doubt not, if I had time, I could make appear. But it is now late, and we will, if you think fit, defer this subject till to-morrow.

Upon which motion of Lysicles, we put an end to our conversation for that evening.

THE SECOND DIALOGUE[15].

1. Vulgar error, that vice is hurtful. 2. The benefit of drunkenness, gaming, and whoring. 3. Prejudice against vice wearing off. 4. Its usefulness illustrated in the instances of Callicles and Telesilla. 5. The reasoning of Lysicles in behalf of vice examined. 6. Wrong to punish actions, when the doctrines whence they flow are tolerated. 7. Hazardous experiment of the minute philosophers. 8. Their doctrine of circulation and revolution. 9. Their sense of a reformation. 10. Riches alone not the public weal. 11. Authority of minute philosophers: their prejudice against religion. 12. Effects of luxury: virtue, whether notional? 13. Pleasure of sense. 14. What sort of pleasure most natural to man. 15. Dignity of human nature. 16. Pleasure mistaken. 17. Amusements, misery, and cowardice of minute philosophers. 18. Rakes cannot reckon. 19. Abilities and success of minute philosophers. 20. Happy effects of the minute philosophy in particular instances. 21. Their free notions about government. 22. England the proper soil for minute philosophy. 23. The policy and address of its professors. 24. Merit of minute philosophers towards the public. 25. Their notions and character. 26. Their tendency towards popery and slavery.

1. NEXT morning Alciphron and Lysicles said the weather was so fine they had a mind to spend the day abroad, and take a cold dinner under a shade in some pleasant part of the country. Whereupon, after breakfast, we went down to a beach about half a mile off; where we walked on the smooth sand, with the ocean on one hand, and on the other wild broken rocks, intermixed with shady trees and springs of water, till the sun began to be uneasy. We then withdrew into a hollow glade, between two rocks, where we had no sooner seated ourselves than Lysicles, addressing himself to Euphranor, said:—I am now ready to perform what I undertook last evening, which was to show there is nothing in that necessary connection which some men imagine between those principles you contend for, and the public good. I freely own that, if this question was to be decided by the authority of legislators or philosophers, it must go against us. For, those men generally take it for granted that Vice is pernicious to the public; and that men cannot be kept from vice but by the fear of God, and

[15] In this Dialogue, the species of Utilitarianism defended by Mandeville (here represented by Lysicles) is discussed and rejected; with its paradoxical formula—'private vices, public benefits'—popular among the men of pleasure of the time, who quoted Mandeville as an advocate for the social utility of vice.

the sense of a Future State: whence they are induced to think the belief of such things necessary to the well-being of human-kind. This false notion hath prevailed for many ages in the world, and done an infinite deal of mischief, being in truth the cause of religious establishments, and gaining the protection and encouragement of laws and magistrates to the clergy and their superstitions. Even some of the wisest among the ancients, who agreed with our sect in denying a Providence and the Immortality of the Soul, had nevertheless the weakness to lie under the common prejudice, that vice was hurtful to societies of men. But England hath of late produced great philosophers[16], who have undeceived the world, and proved to a demonstration that private vices are public benefits. This discovery was reserved to our times, and our sect hath the glory of it.

Cri. It is possible some men of fine understanding might in former ages have had a glimpse of this important truth; but it may be presumed they lived in ignorant times and bigoted countries, which were not ripe for such a discovery.

Lys. Men of narrow capacities and short sight, being able to see no further than one link in a chain of consequences, are shocked at small evils which attend upon vice. But those who can enlarge their view, and look through a long series of events, may behold happiness resulting from vice, and good springing out of evil in a thousand instances. To prove my point, I shall not trouble you with authorities, or far-fetched arguments, but bring you to plain matter of fact. Do but take a view of each particular vice, and trace it through its effects and consequences, and then you will clearly perceive the advantage it brings to the public.

[16] Mandeville, in his *Fable of the Bees; or, Private Vices, Public Benefits*, is here referred to. Cf. Berkeley's *Discourse addressed to Magistrates*, sect. 53, &c. 'It is not,' says Dr. Hutcheson, in his reply to Mandeville, 'the interest of every writer to free his words from ambiguity. "Private vices public benefits" may signify any one of these five distinct propositions:—"private vices are themselves public benefits;" or, "private vices naturally tend, as the direct and necessary means, to produce public happiness;" or, "private vices, by dexterous management of governors, may be made to tend to public happiness;" or, "private vices naturally and necessarily flow from public happiness;" or, lastly, "private vices will probably flow from public prosperity, through the present corruption of men." . . . Far be it from a candid writer to charge upon him [Mandeville] any one of these opinions more than another; for, if we treat him fairly, and compare the several parts of his works together, we shall find no ground for such a charge.'—(*Remarks upon the Fable of the Bees.*) See also Mandeville's *Letter to Dion*, pp. 36—38, in which he seems to adopt the third of the above propositions as his real meaning, and affects that by 'happiness' he intends temporal or earthly felicity only.

2. Drunkenness[17], for instance, is by your sober moralists thought a pernicious vice; but it is for want of considering the good effects that flow from it. For, in the first place, it increases the malt tax[17], a principal branch of his majesty's revenue, and thereby promotes the safety, strength, and glory of the nation. Secondly, it employs a great number of hands, the brewer, the maltster, the ploughman, the dealer in hops, the smith, the carpenter, the brazier, the joiner, with all other artificers necessary to supply those enumerated with their respective instruments and utensils[17]. All which advantages are procured from drunkenness in the vulgar way, by strong beer. This point is so clear it will admit of no dispute. But, while you are forced to allow thus much, I foresee you are ready to object against drunkenness occasioned by wine and spirits, as exporting wealth into foreign countries. But do you not reflect on the number of hands which even this sets on work at home: the distillers, the vintners, the merchants, the sailors, the shipwrights, with all those who are employed towards victualling and fitting out ships, which upon a nice computation will be found to include an incredible variety of trades and callings. Then, for freighting our ships to answer these foreign importations, all our manufacturers throughout the kingdom are employed, the spinners, the weavers, the dyers, the wool-combers, the carriers, the packers. And the same may be said of many other manufacturers, as well as the woollen. And if it be further considered how many men are enriched by all the forementioned ways of trade and business, and the expenses of these men and their families, in all the several articles of convenient and fashionable living, whereby all sorts of trades and callings, not only at home but throughout all parts wherever our commerce reaches, are kept in employment; you will be amazed at the wonderfully-extended scene of benefits which arises from the single vice of drunkenness, so much run down and declaimed against by all grave reformers.

With as much judgment your half-witted folk are accustomed to censure gaming[18]. And indeed (such is the ignorance and folly of mankind) a gamester and a drunkard are thought no better than public nuisances, when in truth they do each in their way greatly

[17] See *Fable of the Bees*, 'Remark' G, where the author seeks to illustrate the tendency of drinking to increase wealth.

[18] See *Fable of the Bees*, 'Remark' E, on the social advantages of gambling.

conduce to the public benefit. If you look only on the surface and first appearance of things, you will no doubt think playing at cards a very idle and fruitless occupation. But dive deeper, and you shall perceive this idle amusement employs the card-maker, and he sets the paper-mills at work, by which the poor rag-man is supported; not to mention the builders and workers in wood and iron that are employed in erecting and furnishing those mills. Look still deeper, and you shall find that candles and chair-hire employ the industrious and the poor, who, by these means, come to be relieved by sharpers and gentlemen, who would not give one penny in charity. But, you will say that many gentlemen and ladies are ruined by play, without considering that what one man loses another gets, and that, consequently, as many are made as ruined: money changeth hands, and in this circulation the life of business and commerce consists. When money is spent, it is all one to the public who spends it. Suppose a fool of quality becomes the dupe of a man of mean birth and circumstance who has more wit? In this case what harm doth the public sustain? Poverty is relieved, ingenuity is rewarded, the money stays at home, and has a lively circulation, the ingenious sharper being enabled to set up an equipage and spend handsomely, which cannot be done without employing a world of people. But you will perhaps object that a man reduced by play may be put upon desperate courses, hurtful to the public. Suppose the worst, and that he turns highwaymen; such men have a short life and a merry. While he lives, he spends, and for one that he robs makes twenty the better for his expense. And, when his time is come, a poor family may be relieved by fifty or a hundred pounds set upon his head. A vulgar eye looks on many a man as an idle or mischievous fellow, whom a true philosopher, viewing in another light, considers as a man of pleasant occupation, who diverts himself, and benefits the public, and that with so much ease that he employs a multitude of men, and sets an infinite machine in motion, without knowing the good he does, or even intending to do any: which is peculiar to that gentleman-like way of doing good by vice.

I was considering play, and that insensibly led me to the advantages which attend robbing on the highway. Oh the beautiful and never-enough-admired connection of vices! It would take too

much time to show how they all hang together, and what an infinite deal of good takes its rise from every one of them. One word for a favourite vice, and I shall leave you to make out the rest yourself, by applying the same way of reasoning to all other vices. A poor girl, who might not have the spending of half-a-crown a week in what you call an honest way, no sooner hath the good fortune to be a kept-mistress, but she employs milliners, laundresses, tire-women, mercers, and a number of other trades, to the benefit of her country. It would be endless to trace and pursue every particular vice through its consequences and effects, and shew the vast advantage they all are of to the public. The true springs that actuate the great machine of commerce, and make a flourishing state, have been hitherto little understood. Your moralists and divines have for so many ages been corrupting the genuine sense of mankind, and filling their heads with such absurd principles, that it is in the power of few men to contemplate real life with an unprejudiced eye. And fewer still have sufficient parts and sagacity to pursue a long train of consequences, relations, and dependences, which must be done in order to form a just and entire notion of the public weal. But, as I said before, our sect hath produced men capable of these discoveries, who have displayed them in full light, and made them public for the benefit of their country.

3. Oh! said Euphranor, who heard this discourse with great attention, you, Lysicles, are the very man I wanted, eloquent and ingenious, knowing in the principles of your sect, and willing to impart them. Pray tell me, do these principles find an easy admission in the world?

Lys. They do among ingenious men and people of fashion, though you will sometimes meet with strong prejudices against them in the middle sort, an effect of ordinary talents and mean breeding.

Euph. I should wonder if men were not shocked at notions of such a surprising nature, so contrary to all laws, education, and religion.

Lys. They would be shocked much more if it had not been for the skilful address of our philosophers, who, considering that most men are influenced by names rather than things, have introduced

a certain polite way of speaking, which lessens much of the abhorrence and prejudice towards vice.

Euph. Explain me this.

Lys. Thus, in our dialect, a vicious man is a man of pleasure, a sharper is one that plays the whole game, a lady is said to have an affair, a gentleman to be a gallant, a rogue in business to be one that knows the world. By this means, we have no such things as sots, debauchees, whores, rogues, or the like, in the *beau monde*, who may enjoy their vices without incurring disagreeable appellations.

Euph. Vice then is, it seems, a fine thing with an ugly name.

Lys. Be assured it is.

Euph. It should seem then that Plato's fearing lest youth might be corrupted by those fables which represented the gods vicious was an effect of his weakness and ignorance[19].

Lys. It was, take my word for it.

Euph. And yet Plato had kept good company, and lived in a court! And Cicero, who knew the world well, had a profound esteem for him[20].

Cri. I tell you, Euphranor, that Plato and Tully might perhaps make a figure in Athens or Rome: but, were they to revive in our days, they would pass but for underbred pedants, there being at most coffee-houses in London several able men who could convince them they knew nothing in, what they are valued so much for, morals and politics.

Lys. How many long-headed men do I know, both in the court-end and the city, with five times Plato's sense, who care not one straw what notions their sons have of God or virtue.

4. *Cri.* I can illustrate this doctrine of Lysicles by examples that will make you perceive its force. Cleophon, a minute philosopher, took strict care of his son's education, and entered him betimes in the principles of his sect. Callicles (that was his son's name), being a youth of parts, made a notable progress; insomuch that before he became of age he killed his old covetous father with vexation, and ruined the estate he left behind him; or, in other words, made a present of it to the public, spreading the dunghill collected by his ancestors over the face of the nation, and

[19] See *Republic*, B. II.

[20] See *Tuscul. Quæst.* I. 17.

making out of one overgrown estate several pretty fortunes for ingenious men, who live by the vices of the great. Telesilla, though a woman of quality and spirit, made no figure in the world, till she was instructed by her husband in the tenets of minute philosophy, which he wisely thought would prevent her giving anything in charity. From that time, she took a turn towards expensive diversions, particularly deep play, by which means she soon transferred a considerable share of his fortune to several acute men skilled in that mystery, who wanted it more, and circulated it quicker, than her husband would have done, who in return hath got an heir to his estate, having never had a child before. The same Telesilla, who was good for nothing as long as she believed her catechism, now shines in all public places, is a lady of gallantry and fashion, and has, by her extravagant parade in lace and fine clothes, raised a spirit of expense in other ladies, very much to the public benefit, though it must be owned to the mortification of many frugal husbands.

While Crito related these facts with a grave face, I could not forbear smiling, which Lysicles observing—Superficial minds, said he, may perhaps find something to ridicule in these accounts; but all who are masters of a just way of thinking must needs see that those maxims, the benefit whereof is universal, and the damage only particular to private persons or families, ought to be encouraged in a wise commonwealth.

For my part, said Euphranor, I confess myself to be rather dazzled and confounded than convinced by your reasoning; which, as you observed yourself, taking in the connection of many distant points, requires great extent of thought to comprehend it. I must therefore intreat you to bear with my defects; suffer me to take to pieces what is too big to be received at once. And, where I cannot keep pace with you, permit me to follow you step by step, as fast as I can.

Lys. There is reason in what you say. Every one cannot suddenly take a long concatenation of arguments.

Euph. Your several arguments seem to centre in this: that vice circulates money and promotes industry[21], which cause a people to flourish. Is it not so?

Lys. It is.

[21] See *Fable of the Bees*, 'Remarks,' passim.

Euph. And the reason that vice produceth this effect, is, because it causeth an extravagant consumption; which is the most beneficial to the manufactures, their encouragement consisting in a quick demand and high price.

Lys. True.

Euph. Hence you think a drunkard most beneficial to the brewer and the vintner, as causing a quick consumption of liquor, inasmuch as he drinks more than other men?

Lys. Without doubt.

Euph. Say, Lysicles, who drinks most, a sick man or a healthy?

Lys. A healthy.

Euph. And which is healthier, a sober man or a drunkard?

Lys. A sober man.

Euph. A sober man, therefore, in health may drink more than a drunkard when he is sick?

Lys. He may.

Euph. What think you, will a man consume more meat and drink in a long life or a short one?

Lys. In a long.

Euph. A sober healthy man, therefore, in a long life, may circulate more money by eating and drinking, than a glutton or drunkard in a short one?

Lys. What then?

Euph. Why then it should seem that he may be more beneficial to the public, even in this way of eating and drinking.

Lys. I shall never own that temperance is the way to promote drinking.

Euph. But you will own sickness lessens, and death puts an end to all drinking? The same argument will hold, for aught I can see, with respect to all other vices that impair men's health and shorten their lives. And, if we admit this, it will not be so clear a point that vice hath merit towards the public [22].

Lys. But, admitting that some artificers or traders might be as well encouraged by the sober men as the vicious; what shall we say of those who subsist altogether by vice and vanity?

Euph. If such there are, may they not be otherwise employed without loss to the public? Tell me, Lysicles, is there anything

[22] See Hutcheson's *Remarks upon the Fable of the Bees*, p. 61, where similar reasoning is employed.

in the nature of vice, as such, that renders it a public blessing, or is it only the consumption it occasions?

Lys. I have already shewn how it benefits the nation by the consumption of its manufactures.

Euph. And you have granted that a long and healthy life consumes more than a short and sickly one; and you will not deny that many consume more than one? Upon the whole then, compute and say, which is most likely to promote the industry of his countrymen, a virtuous married man with a healthy numerous offspring, and who feeds and clothes the orphans in his neighbourhood, or a fashionable rake about town? I would fain know whether money spent innocently doth not circulate as well as that spent upon vice? And, if so, whether by your own rule it doth not benefit the public as much?

Lys. What I have proved, I proved plainly, and there is no need of more words about it.

Euph. You seem to me to have proved nothing, unless you can make it out that it is impossible to spend a fortune innocently. I should think the public weal of a nation consists in the number and good condition of its inhabitants; have you anything to object to in this?

Lys. I think not.

Euph. To this end which would most conduce, the employing men in open air and manly exercise, or in a sedentary business within doors?

Lys. The former, I suppose.

Euph. Should it not seem, therefore, that building, gardening, and agriculture would employ men more usefully to the public than if tailors, barbers, perfumers, distillers, and such arts were multiplied?

Lys. All this I grant; but it makes against you. For, what moves men to build and plant but vanity, and what is vanity but vice?

Euph. But, if a man should do those things for his convenience or pleasure, and in proportion to his fortune, without a foolish ostentation, or overrating them beyond their due value, they would not then be the effect of vice; and how do you know but this may be the case?

Cri. One thing I know, that the readiest way to quicken that

sort of industry, and employ carpenters, masons, smiths, and all such trades, would be to put in practice the happy hint of a celebrated minute philosopher[23], who, by profound thinking, has discovered that burning the city of London would be no such bad action as silly prejudiced people might possibly imagine; inasmuch as it would produce a quick circulation of property, transferring it from the rich to the poor, and employing a great number of artificers of all kinds. This, at least, cannot be denied, that it hath opened a new way of thinking to our incendiaries, of which the public hath of late begun to reap the benefit.

Euph. I cannot sufficiently admire this ingenious thought.

6. But methinks it would be dangerous to make it public.

Cri. Dangerous to whom?

Euph. In the first place to the publisher.

Cri. That is a mistake; for the notion hath been published and met with due applause, in this most wise and happy age of free-thinking, free-speaking, free-writing, and free-acting.

Euph. How may a man then publish and practise such things with impunity?

Cri. To speak the truth, I am not so clear as to the practical part. An unlucky accident now and then befals an ingenious man. The minute philosopher Magirus, being desirous to benefit the public, by circulating an estate possessed by a near relation who had not the heart to spend it, soon convinced himself, upon these principles, that it would be a very worthy action to dispatch out of the way such a useless fellow, to whom he was next heir. But, for this laudable attempt, he had the misfortune to be hanged by an underbred judge and jury. Could anything be more unjust?

Euph. Why unjust?

Cri. Is it not unjust to punish actions, when the principles from which they directly follow are tolerated and applauded by the public? Can anything be more inconsistent than to condemn in practice what is approved in speculation? Truth is one and the same; it being impossible a thing should be practically wrong and speculatively right. Thus much is certain, Magirus

[23] Mandeville, who refers to this passage in his *Letter to Dion*, p. 4.

was perfect master of all this theory, and argued most acutely about it with a friend of mine, a little before he did the fact for which he died.

Lys. The best of it is the world every day grows wiser.

Cri. You mistake, Euphranor, if you think the minute philosophers idle theorists; they are men of practical views.

Euph. As much as I love liberty, I should be afraid to live among such people; it would be, as Seneca somewhere expresseth it, *in libertate bellis ac tyrannis sæviore.*

Lys. What do you mean by quoting Plato and Seneca? Can you imagine a free-thinker is to be influenced by the authority of such old-fashioned writers?

Euph. You, Lysicles, and your friend, have often quoted to me ingenious moderns, profound fine gentlemen, with new names of authors in the minute philosophy, to whose merits I am a perfect stranger. Suffer me in my turn to cite such authorities as I know, and have passed for many ages upon the world.

7. But, authority apart, what do you say to experience? My observation can reach as far as a private family; and some wise men have thought a family may be considered as a small kingdom, or a kingdom as a great family. Do you admit this to be true?

Lys. If I say *yes*, you will make an inference; and if I say *no*, you will demand a reason. The best way is to say nothing at all. There is, I see, no end of answering.

Euph. If you give up the point you undertook to prove, there is an end at once: but, if you hope to convince me, you must answer my questions, and allow me the liberty to argue and infer.

Lys. Well, suppose I admit that a kingdom may be considered as a great family.

Euph. I shall ask you then, whether ever you knew private families thrive by those vices you think so beneficial to the public?

Lys. Suppose I have not.

Euph. Might not a man therefore, by a parity of reason, suspect their being of that benefit to the public?

Lys. Fear not; the next age will thrive and flourish.

Euph. Pray tell me, Lysicles; suppose you saw a fruit of a new untried kind; would you recommend it to your own family to make a full meal of?

Lys. I would not.

Euph. Why then would you try upon your own country these maxims which were never admitted in any other?

Lys. The experiment must begin somewhere; and we are resolved our own country shall have the honour and advantage of it.

Euph. O Lysicles! hath not old England subsisted for many ages without the help of your notions?

Lys. She has.

Euph. And made some figure?

Lys. I grant it.

Euph. Why then should you make her run the risk of a new experiment, when it is certain she may do without it?

Lys. But we would make her do better. We would produce a change in her that never was seen in any nation.

Euph. Sallust observes[24] that a little before the downfall of the Roman greatness avarice (the effect of luxury) had erased the good old principles of probity and justice, had produced a contempt for religion, and made everything venal; while ambition bred dissimulation, and caused men to unite in clubs and parties, not from honourable motives, but narrow and interested views. The same historian observes[25] of that great free-thinker Catiline, that he made it his business to insinuate himself into the acquaintance of young men, whose minds, unimproved by years and experience, were more easily seduced. I know not how it happens, but these passages have occurred to my thoughts more than once during this conversation.

Lys. Sallust was a sententious pedant.

Euph. But consult any historian, look into any writer. See, for instance, what Xenophon and Livy say of Sparta and Rome, and then tell me if vice be not the likeliest way to ruin and enslave a people.

Lys. When a point is clear by its own evidence, I never think it worth while to consult old authors about it.

[24] *Catilina*, 10. [25] *Ibid.* 16.

Cri. It requires much thought and delicate observation to go to the bottom of things. But one who hath come at truth with difficulty can impart it with ease. I will, therefore, Euphranor, explain to you in three words (what none of your old writers ever dreamt of)—the true cause of ruin to those states. You must know that vice and virtue, being opposite and contradictory principles, both working at once in a state, will produce contrary effects, which intestine discord must needs tend to the dissolution and ruin of the whole. But it is the design of our minute philosophers, by making men wicked upon principle, a thing unknown to the ancients, so to weaken and destroy the force of virtue that its effects shall not be felt in the public. In which case, vice being uncontrolled, without let or impediment of principle, pure and genuine, without allay of virtue, the nation must doubtless be very flourishing and triumphant.

Euph. Truly, a noble scheme!

Cri. And in a fair way to take effect. For, our young proficients in the minute philosophy, having, by a rare felicity of education, no tincture of bigotry or prejudice, do far outgo the old standers and professors of the sect; who, though men of admirable parts, yet, having had the misfortune to be imbued in their childhood with some religious notions, could never after get entirely rid of them; but still retain some small grains of conscience and superstition, which are a check upon the noblest genius. In proof of this, I remember that the famous minute philosopher, old Demodicus, came one day from conversation upon business with Timander, a young gentleman of the same sect, full of astonishment. I am surprised, said he, to see so young, and withal so complete a villain; and, such was the force of prejudice, spoke of Timander with abhorrence, not considering that he was only the more egregious and profound philosopher of the two.

8. *Euph.* Though much may be hoped from the unprejudiced education of young gentlemen, yet it seems we are not to expect a settled and entire happiness, before vice reigns pure and unmixed: till then, much is to be feared from the dangerous struggle between vice and virtue, which may perchance overturn and dissolve this government, as it hath done others.

Lys. No matter for that, if a better comes in its place. We

have cleared the land of all prejudices towards government or constitution, and made them fly like other phantasms before the light of reason and good sense. Men who think deeply cannot see any reason why power should not change hands as well as property; or why the fashion of a government should not be changed as easy as that of a garment. The perpetual circulating and revolving of wealth and power, no matter through what or whose hands, is that which keeps up life and spirit in a state[26]. Those who are even slightly read in our philosophy, know that of all prejudices, the silliest is an attachment to forms.

Cri. To say no more upon so clear a point, the overturning of a government may be justified upon the same principles as the burning a town, would produce parallel effects, and equally contribute to the public good. In both cases, the natural springs of action are forcibly exerted; and, in this general industry, what one loses another gets, a quick circulation of wealth and power making the sum total to flourish.

Euph. And do the minute philosophers publish these things to the world?

Lys. It must be confessed our writers proceed in Politics with greater caution than they think necessary with regard to Religion.

Cri. But those things plainly follow from their principles, and are to be admitted for the genuine doctrine of the sect, expressed perhaps with more freedom and perspicuity than might be thought prudent by those who would manage the public, or not offend weak brethren.

Euph. And pray, is there not need of caution, a rebel or incendiary being characters that many men have a prejudice against?

Lys. Weak people of all ranks have a world of absurd prejudices.

Euph. But the better sort, such as statesmen and legislators; do you think they have not the same indisposition towards admitting your principles?

Lys. Perhaps they may; but the reason is plain.

Cri. This puts me in mind of that ingenious philosopher, the gamester Glaucus, who used to say, that statesmen and law-givers may keep a stir about right and wrong, just and unjust, but that,

[26] See *Fable of the Bees*, 'Remarks' G, I, L, N.

in truth, property of every kind had so often passed from the right owners by fraud and violence that it was now to be considered as lying on the common, and with equal right belonged to every one that could seize it.

Euph. What are we to think then of laws and regulations relating to right and wrong, crimes and duties?

Lys. They serve to bind weak minds, and keep the vulgar in awe: but no sooner doth a true genius arise, but he breaks his way to greatness through all the trammels of duty, conscience, religion, law; to all which he sheweth himself infinitely superior.

9. *Euph.* You are, it seems, for bringing about a thorough reformation?

Lys. As to what is commonly called the Reformation, I could never see how or wherein the world was the better for it. It is much the same as Popery, with this difference, that it is the more prude-like and disagreeable thing of the two. A noted writer of ours makes it too great a compliment, when he computes the benefit of hooped petticoats to be nearly equal to that of the Reformation. Thorough reformation is thorough liberty. Leave nature at full freedom to work her own way, and all will be well. This is what we aim at, and nothing short of this can come up to our principles.

Crito, who is a zealous protestant, hearing these words, could not refrain. The worst effect of the Reformation, said he, was the rescuing wicked men from a darkness which kept them in awe. This, as it hath proved, was holding out light to robbers and murderers. Light in itself is good, and the same light which shews a man the folly of superstition, might shew him the truth of religion, and the madness of atheism. But, to make use of light only to see the evils on one side, and never to see, but to run blindly upon the worst extreme—this is to make the best of things produce evil, in the same sense as you prove the worst of things to produce good, to wit, accidentally or indirectly: and, by the same method of arguing, you may prove that even diseases are useful: but whatever benefit seems to accrue to the public, either from disease of mind or body, is not their genuine offspring, and may be obtained without them.

Lysicles was a little disconcerted by the affirmative air of Crito;

but, after a short pause, replied briskly, That to contemplate the public good was not every one's talent.

True, said Euphranor, I question whether every one can frame a notion of the public good, much less judge of the means to promote it.

10. But you, Lysicles, who are master of this subject, will be pleased to inform me, whether the public good of a nation doth not imply the particular good of its individuals?

Lys. It doth.

Euph. And doth not the good or happiness of a man consist in having both soul and body sound and in good condition, enjoying those things which their respective natures require, and free from those things which are odious or hurtful to them?

Lys. I do not deny all this to be true.

Euph. Now, it should seem worth while to consider, whether the regular decent life of a virtuous man may not as much conduce to this end as the mad sallies of intemperance and debauchery.

Lys. I will acknowledge that a nation may merely subsist, or be kept alive, but it is impossible it should flourish without the aid of vice. To produce a quick circulation of traffic and wealth in a state, there must be exorbitant and irregular motions in the appetites and passions[27].

Euph. The more people a nation contains, and the happier those people are, the more that nation may be said to flourish. I think we are agreed in this point.

Lys. We are.

Euph. You allow then that riches are not an ultimate end, but should only be considered as the means to procure happiness?

Lys. I do.

[27] 'The worst of all the multitude
Did something for the common good;
This was the State's-craft that maintained
The whole, of which each part complained.
This, as in music harmony
Made jarrings in the main agree;
Parties directly opposite
Assist each other, as 'twere for spite;
And temperance with sobriety
Serve drunkenness and gluttony.
The root of evil, avarice,
That damned, ill-natur'd, baneful vice,
Was slave to prodigality,
That noble sin; whilst luxury
Employed a million of the poor,
And odious pride a million more;
Envy itself, and vanity,
Were ministers of industry,' &c.
The Grumbling Hive.
See relative 'Remarks' in *Fable of the Bees.*

Euph. It seems that means cannot be of use without our knowing the end, and how to apply them to it?

Lys. It seems so.

Euph. Will it not follow that in order to make a nation flourish it is not sufficient to make it wealthy, without knowing the true end and happiness of mankind, and how to apply wealth towards attaining that end. In proportion as these points are known and practised, I think the nation should be likely to flourish. But, for a people who neither know nor practise them, to gain riches seems to me the same advantage that it would be for a sick man to come at plenty of meat and drink, which he could not use but to his hurt.

Lys. This is mere sophistry; it is arguing without persuading. Look into common life; examine the pursuits of men: have a due respect for the consent of the world; and you will soon be convinced that riches alone are sufficient to make a nation flourishing and happy. Give them riches and they will make themselves happy, without that political invention, that trick of statesmen and philosophers, called virtue.

11. *Euph.* Virtue then, in your account, is a trick of statesmen?

Lys. It is.

Euph. Why then do your sagacious sect betray and divulge that trick or secret of state, which wise men have judged necessary for the good government of the world?

Lysicles hesitating, Crito made answer, That he presumed it was because their sect, being wiser than all other wise men, disdained to see the world governed by wrong maxims, and would set all things on a right bottom.

Euph. Thus much is certain. If we look into all institutions of government, and the political writings of such as have heretofore passed for wise men, we shall find a great regard for virtue.

Lys. You shall find a strong tincture of prejudice; but, as I said before, consult the multitude if you would find nature and truth.

Euph. But, among country gentlemen, and farmers, and the better sort of tradesmen, is not virtue a reputable thing?

Lys. You pick up authorities among men of low life and vile education.

Euph. Perhaps we ought to pay a decent respect to the authority of minute philosophers.

Lys. And I would fain know whose authority should be more considered than that of those gentlemen, who are alone above prejudice, and think for themselves.

Euph. How doth it appear that you are the only unprejudiced part of mankind? May not a minute philosopher, as well as another man, be prejudiced in favour of the leaders of his sect? May not an atheistical education prejudice towards atheism? What should hinder a man's being prejudiced against religion, as well as for it? Or can you assign any reason why an attachment to pleasure, interest, vice, or vanity, may not be supposed to prejudice men against virtue?

Lys. This is pleasant. What! suppose those very men influenced by prejudice who are always disputing against it, whose constant aim it is to detect and demolish prejudices of all kinds!

Except their own, replied Crito; for, you must pardon me if I cannot help thinking they have some small prejudice, though not in favour of virtue.

12. I observe, Lysicles, that you allowed to Euphranor[28], the greater number of happy people there are in a state, the more that state may be said to flourish: it follows, therefore, that such methods as multiply inhabitants are good, and such as diminish them are bad, for the public. And one would think nobody need be told, that the strength of a state consists more in the number and sort of people than in anything else. But, in proportion as vice and luxury, those public blessings encouraged by this minute philosophy, prevail among us, fewer are disposed to marry, too many being diverted by pleasure, disabled by disease, or frightened by expense. Nor doth vice only thin a nation, but also debaseth it by a puny degenerate race. I might add that it is ruinous to our manufactures; both as it makes labour dear, and thereby enables our more frugal neighbours to undersell us: and also as it diverts the lower sort of people from honest callings to wicked projects. If these and such considerations were taken

[28] Cf. sect. 10.

into account, I believe it would be evident to any man in his senses that the imaginary benefits of vice bear no proportion to the solid real woes that attend it.

Lysicles, upon this, shook his head, and smiled at Crito, without vouchsafing any answer. After which, addressing himself to Euphranor, There cannot, said he, be a stronger instance of prejudice than that a man should at this time of day preserve a reverence for that idol Virtue, a thing so effectually exposed and exploded by the most knowing men of the age, who have shewn that a man is a mere engine, played upon and driven about by sensible objects; and that moral virtue is only a name, a notion, a chimera, an enthusiasm, or at best a fashion, uncertain and changeable, like all other fashions.

Euph. What do you think, Lysicles, of health; doth it depend on fancy and caprice, or is it something real in the bodily composition of a man?

Lys. Health is something real, which results from the right constitution and temperature of the organs and the fluids circulating through them.

Euph. This you say is health of body?

Lys. It is.

Euph. And may we not suppose a healthy constitution of soul, when the notions are right, the judgments true, the will regular, the passions and appetites directed to their proper objects, and confined within due bounds? This, in regard to the soul, seems what health is to the body. And the man whose mind is so constituted, is he not properly called virtuous? And to produce this healthy disposition in the minds of his countrymen, should not every good man employ his endeavours? If these things have any appearance of truth, as to me they seem to have, it will not then be so clear a point that virtue is a mere whim or fashion, as you are pleased to represent it—I must own something unexpectedly, after what had been discoursed in last evening's conference, which, if you would call to mind, might perhaps save both of us some trouble.

Lys. Would you know the truth, Euphranor? I must own I have quite forgot all your discourse about virtue, duty, and all such points, which, being of an airy notional nature, are apt to

vanish, and leave no trace on a mind accustomed only to receive impression from realities.

13. Having heard these words, Euphranor looked at Crito and me, and said, smiling, I have mistaken my part; it was mine to learn, and his to instruct. Then, addressing himself to Lysicles, Deal faithfully, said he, and let me know, whether the *public* benefit of vice be in truth that which makes you plead for it?

Lys. I love to speak frankly what I think. Know then that *private* interest is the first and principal consideration with philosophers of our sect. Now of all interests pleasure is that which hath the strongest charms, and no pleasures like those which are heightened and enlivened by licence. Herein consists the peculiar excellency of our principles, that they shew people how to serve their country by diverting themselves, causing the two streams of public spirit and self-love to unite and run in the same channel. I have told you already that I admit a nation might subsist by the rules of virtue. But, give me leave to say, it will barely subsist, in a dull joyless insipid state; whereas the sprightly excesses of vice inspire men with joy. And where particulars rejoice, the public, which is made up of particulars, must do so too: that is, the public must be happy. This I take to be an irrefragable argument. But, to give you its full force, and make it as plain as possible, I will trace things from their original. Happiness[29] is the end to which created beings naturally tend[29]; but we find that all animals, whether men or brutes, do naturally and principally pursue real pleasure of sense; which is therefore to be thought their supreme good, their true end and happiness. It is for this men live; and whoever understands life must allow that man to enjoy the top and flower of it who hath a quick sense of pleasure, and withal spirit, skill, and fortune sufficient to gratify every appetite and every taste. Niggards and fools will envy or traduce such a one because they cannot equal him. Hence all that sober trifling in disparagement of what every one would be master of if he could—a full freedom and unlimited scope of pleasure.

[29] See Aristotle's *Nichom. Ethics*, I. 4—7. X. 1—7; Cicero, *De Finibus*, I. 11.

Euph. Let me see whether I understand you. Pleasure of sense, you say, is the chief pleasure?

Lys. I do.

Euph. And this would be cramped and diminished by virtue?

Lys. It would.

Euph. Tell me, Lysicles, is pleasure then at the height when the appetites are satisfied?

Lys. There is then only an indolence, the lively sense of pleasure being past.

Euph. It should seem, therefore, that the appetites must be always craving, to preserve pleasure alive?

Lys. That is our sense of the matter.

Euph. The Greek philosopher, therefore, was in the right, who considered the body of a man of pleasure as a leaky vessel, always filling and never full.

Lys. You may divert yourself with allegories, if you please. But all the while ours is literally the true taste of nature. Look throughout the universe, and you shall find birds and fishes, beasts and insects, all kinds of animals, with which the creation swarms, constantly engaged by instinct in the pursuit of sensible pleasure. And shall man alone be the grave fool who thwarts, and crosses, and subdues his appetites, whilst his fellow-creatures do all most joyfully and freely indulge them?

Euph. How! Lysicles! I thought that being governed by the senses, appetites, and passions was the most grievous slavery; and that the proper business of free-thinkers, or philosophers, had been to set men from the power of ambition, avarice, and sensuality!

Lys. You mistake the point. We make men relish the world, attentive to their interests, lively and luxurious in their pleasures, without fear or restraint either from God or man. We despise those preaching writers, who used to disturb or cramp the pleasures and amusements of human life. We hold that a wise man who meddles with business doth it altogether for his interest, and refers his interest to his pleasure. With us it is a maxim, that a man should seize the moments as they fly. Without love, and wine, and play, and late hours we hold life not to be worth living. I grant, indeed, that there is something gross and ill-bred in the vices of mean men, which the genteel philosopher abhors.

Cri. But to cheat, whore, betray, get drunk, do all these things decently, this is true wisdom, and elegance of taste.

14. *Euph.* To me, who have been used to another way of thinking, this new philosophy seems difficult to digest. I must, therefore, beg leave to examine its principles with the same freedom that you do those of other sects.

Lys. Agreed.

Euph. You say, if I mistake not, that a wise man pursues only his private interest, and that this consists in sensual pleasure; for proof whereof you appeal to nature. Is not this what you advance?

Lys. It is.

Euph. You conclude, therefore, that, as other animals are guided by natural instinct, man too ought to follow the dictates of sense and appetite?

Lys. I do.

Euph. But in this do you not argue as if man had only sense and appetite for his guides—on which supposition there might be truth in what you say? But what if he hath intellect, reason, a higher instinct and a nobler life[30]? If this be the case, and you, being man, live like a brute, is it not the way to be defrauded of your true happiness? to be mortified and disappointed? Consider most sort of brutes, you shall perhaps find them have a greater share of sensual happiness than man.

Lys. To our sorrow we do. This hath made several gentlemen of our sect envy brutes, and lament the lot of human-kind.

Cri. It was a consideration of this sort which inspired Erotylus with the laudable ambition of wishing himself a snail, upon hearing of certain particularities discovered in that animal by a modern virtuoso.

Euph. Tell me, Lysicles, if you had an inexhaustible fund of gold and silver, should you envy another for having a little more copper than you?

Lys. I should not.

Euph. Are not reason, imagination, and sense, faculties differing in kind, and in rank higher one than another?

Lys. I do not deny it.

[30] See Butler's *Sermons*, Preface.

Euph. Their acts therefore differ in kind?

Lys. They do.

Euph. Consequently the pleasures perfective of those acts are also different.

Lys. They are.

Euph. You admit, therefore, three sorts of pleasure:—pleasure of reason, pleasure of imagination, and pleasure of sense.

Lys. I do.

Euph. And, as it is reasonable to think the operation of the highest and noblest faculty to be attended with the highest pleasure, may we not suppose the two former to be as gold or silver, and the latter only as copper? whence it should seem to follow that man need not envy or imitate a brute.

Lys. And, nevertheless, there are very ingenious men who do. And surely every one may be allowed to know what he wants, and wherein his true happiness consists.

Euph. Is it not plain that different animals have different pleasures? Take a hog from his ditch or dunghill, lay him on a rich bed, treat him with sweetmeats, and music, and perfumes. All these things will be no entertainment to him. Do not a bird, a beast, a fish amuse themselves in various manners, insomuch that what is pleasing to one may be death to another? Is it ever seen that one of those animals quits its own element or way of living, to adopt that of another? and shall man quit his own nature to imitate a brute?

Lys. But sense is not only natural to brutes; is it not also natural to man?

Euph. It is, but with this difference: it maketh the whole of a brute, but is the lowest part or faculty of a human soul. The nature of anything is peculiarly that which doth distinguish it from other things, not what it hath in common with them. Do you allow this to be true?

Lys. I do.

Euph. And is not reason that which makes the principal difference between man and other animals?

Lys. It is.

Euph. Reason, therefore, being the principal part of our nature, whatever is most reasonable should seem most natural to man. Must we not therefore think rational pleasures more agreeable

to human-kind than those of sense? Man and beast, having different natures, seem to have different faculties, different enjoyments, and different sorts of happiness. You can easily conceive, that the sort of life which makes the happiness of a mole or a bat would be a very wretched one for an eagle. And may you not as well conceive that the happiness of a brute can never constitute the true happiness of a man? A beast, without reflection or remorse, without foresight, or appetite of immortality, without notion of vice or virtue, or order, or reason, or knowledge! What motive, what grounds, can there be for bringing down man, in whom are all these things, to a level with such a creature? What merit, what ambition, in the minute philosopher to make such an animal a guide or rule for human life[31]?

15. *Lys.* It is strange, Euphranor, that one who admits freedom of thought, as you do, should yet be such a slave to prejudice. You still talk of order and virtue, as of real things, as if our philosophers had never demonstrated that they have no foundation in nature, and are only the effects of education.

I know, said Crito, how the minute philosophers are accustomed to demonstrate this point. They consider the animal nature of man, or man so far forth as he is animal[32]; and it must be owned that, considered in that light, he hath no sense of duty, no notion of virtue. He, therefore, who should look for virtue among mere animals, or human-kind as such, would look in the wrong place. But that philosopher who is attentive only to the animal part of his being, and raiseth his theories from the very dregs of our species, might probably, upon second thoughts, find himself mistaken.

Look you, Crito, said Lysicles, my argument is with Euphranor; to whom addressing his discourse:—I observe, said he, that you stand much upon the dignity of human nature. This thing of dignity is an old worn-out notion, which depends on other notions, old and stale, and worn-out, such as an immaterial spirit, and a ray derived from the Divinity. But in these days men of sense make a jest of all this grandeur and dignity; and

[31] Cf. Dial. I. sect. 14, on the notions and beliefs which are to be esteemed *natural* to man—which constitute his Practical Reason, because agreeable to, or developed from, its constituent elements.

[32] Cf. sect. 14.

many there are would gladly exchange their share of it for the repose, and freedom, and sensuality of a brute. But comparisons are odious; waiving therefore all inquiry concerning the respective excellencies of man and beast, and whether it is beneath a man to follow or imitate brute animals, in judging of the chief good, and conduct of life and manners, I shall be content to appeal to the authority of men themselves for the truth of my notions. Do but look abroad into the world, and ask the common run of men, whether pleasure of sense be not the only true, solid, substantial good of their kind?

Euph. But might not the same vulgar sort of men prefer a piece of sign-post painting to one of Raphael's, or a Grub-street ballad to an ode of Horace? Is there not a real difference between good and bad writing?

Lys. There is.

Euph. And yet you will allow there must be a maturity and improvement of understanding to discern this difference, which doth not make it therefore less real?

Lys. I will.

Euph. In the same manner, what should hinder but there may be in nature a true difference between vice and virtue, although it require some degree of reflection and judgment to observe it? In order to know whether a thing be agreeable to the rational nature of man, it seems one should rather observe and consult those who have most employed or improved their reason.

Lys. Well, I shall not insist on consulting the common herd of mankind. From the ignorant and gross vulgar, I might myself appeal in many cases to men of rank and fashion.

Euph. They are a sort of men I have not the honour to know much of by my own observation. But I remember a remark of Aristotle, who was himself a courtier, and knew them well. 'Virtue,' saith he[33], 'and good sense are not the property of high birth or a great estate. Nor if they who possess these advantages, wanting a taste for rational pleasure, betake themselves to those of sense, ought we therefore to esteem them eligible, any more

[33] [Ethic. ad Nicom. lib. x. c. vi.]—AUTHOR. The higher attributes of man are not necessarily involved in rank; and it is an illusion of the imagination that the pleasures to which the great devote their leisure really constitute happiness. *Cf. Ethics*, I. 5.

than we should the toys and pastimes of children, because they seem so to them?'—And indeed one may be allowed to question whether the truest estimate of things was to be expected from a mind intoxicated with luxury, and dazzled with the splendour of high living.

> Cum stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, et cum
> Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat.—Hor.

Crito upon this observed that he knew an English nobleman who in the prime of life professeth a liberal art, and is the first man of his profession in the world; and that he was very sure he had more pleasure from the exercise of that elegant art than from any sensual enjoyment within the power of one of the largest fortunes and most bountiful spirits in Great Britain[34].

16. *Lys.* But why need we have recourse to the judgment of other men in so plain a case? I appeal to your own breast, consult that, and then say if sensible pleasure be not the chief good of man.

Euph. I, for my part, have often thought those pleasures which are highest in the esteem of sensualists, so far from being the chiefest good, that it seemed doubtful, upon the whole, whether they were any good at all, any more than the mere removal of pain. Are not our wants and appetites uneasy?

Lys. They are.

Euph. Doth not sensual pleasure consist in satisfying them?

Lys. It doth.

Euph. But the cravings are tedious, the satisfaction momentary. Is it not so?

Lys. It is; but what then?

Euph. Why then it should seem that sensual pleasure is but a short deliverance from long pain. A long avenue of uneasiness leads to a point of pleasure, which ends in disgust or remorse.

Cri. And he who pursues this *ignis fatuus* imagines himself a philosopher and free-thinker.

[34] The allusion is probably to Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington, and fourth Earl of Cork, who had a passion for architecture, and who planned various buildings in London and elsewhere. Pope introduced Berkeley, on his return from the Continent, to Lord Burlington, who, as we are told in Stock's Life, 'conceived a high esteem for him on account of his great taste and skill in architecture, an art of which his lordship was an excellent judge and patron, and which Mr. Berkeley had made his particular study while in Italy.'

Lys. Pedants are governed by words and notions, while the wiser men of pleasure follow fact, nature, and sense.

Cri. But what if notional pleasures should in fact prove the most real and lasting? Pure pleasures of reason and imagination neither hurt the health, nor waste the fortune, nor gall the conscience. By them the mind is long entertained without loathing or satiety. On the other hand, a notion (which with you it seems passeth for nothing) often embitters the most lively sensual pleasures; which at bottom will be found also to depend upon notion more than perhaps you imagine: it being a vulgar remark, that those things are more enjoyed by hope and foretaste of the soul than by possession. Thus much is yielded, that the actual enjoyment is very short, and the alternative of appetite and disgust long as well as uneasy. So that, upon the whole, it should seem those gentlemen who are called men of pleasure, from their eager pursuit of it, do in reality, with great expense of fortune, ease, and health, purchase pain.

Lys. You may spin out plausible arguments, but will after all find it a difficult matter to convince me that so many ingenious men should not be able to distinguish between things so directly opposite as pain and pleasure. How is it possible to account for this?

Cri. I believe a reason may be assigned for it, but to men of pleasure no truth is so palatable as a fable. Jove once upon a time having ordered that pleasure and pain should be mixed in equal proportions in every dose of human life; upon a complaint that some men endeavoured to separate what he had joined, and taking more than their share of the sweet, would leave all the sour for others, commanded Mercury to put a stop to this evil, by fixing on each delinquent a pair of invisible spectacles, which should change the appearance of things, making pain look like pleasure, and pleasure like pain, labour like recreation, and recreation like labour. From that time the men of pleasure are eternally mistaking and repenting.

Lys. If your doctrine takes place, I would fain know what can be the advantage of a great fortune, which all mankind so eagerly pursue.

Cri. It is a common saying with Eucrates—that *a great fortune is an edged tool*, which a hundred may come at for one who knows

how to use it, so much easier is the art of getting than that of spending. What its advantage is I will not say, but I will venture to declare what it is not. I am sure that where abundance excludes want, and enjoyment prevents appetites, there is not the quickest sense of those pleasures we have been speaking of, in which the footman hath often a greater share than his lord, who cannot enlarge his stomach in proportion to his estate.

17. Reasonable and well-educated men of all ranks have, I believe, pretty much the same amusements, notwithstanding the difference of their fortunes: but those who are particularly distinguished as men of pleasure seem to possess it in a very small degree.

Euph. I have heard that among persons of that character a game of cards is esteemed a chief diversion.

Lys. Without cards there could be no living for people of fashion. It is the most delightful way of passing an evening when gentlemen and ladies are got together, who would otherwise be at a loss what to say or do with themselves. But a pack of cards is so engaging that it doth not only employ them when they are met, but serves to draw them together. Quadrille gives them pleasure in prospect during the dull hours of the day, they reflect on it with delight, and it furnishes discourse when it is over.

Cri. One would be apt to suspect these people of condition pass their time but heavily, and are but little the better for their fortunes, whose chief amusement is a thing in the power of every porter or footman, who is as well qualified to receive pleasure from cards as a peer. I can easily conceive that, when people of a certain turn are got together, they should prefer doing anything to the ennui of their own conversation; but it is not easy to conceive there is any great pleasure in this. What a card-table can afford requires neither parts nor fortune to judge of.

Lys. Play is a serious amusement, that comes to the relief of a man of pleasure, after the more lively and affecting enjoyments of sense. It kills time beyond anything; and is a most admirable anodyne to divert or prevent thought, which might otherwise prey upon the mind.

Cri. I can easily comprehend that no man upon earth ought to prize anodynes for the spleen more than a man of fashion

and pleasure. An ancient sage, speaking of one of that character, saith he is made wretched by disappointments and appetites, λυπεῖται ἀποτυγχάνων καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν. And if this was true of the Greeks, who lived in the sun, and had so much spirit, I am apt to think it is still more so of our modern English. Something there is in our climate and complexion that makes idleness nowhere so much its own punishment as in England[35], where an uneducated fine gentleman pays for his momentary pleasures, with long and cruel intervals of spleen: for relief of which he is driven into sensual excesses, that produce a proportionable depression of spirits, which, as it createth a greater want of pleasures, so it lessens the ability to enjoy them. There is a cast of thought in the complexion of an Englishman, which renders him the most unsuccessful rake in the world. He is (as Aristotle expresseth it) at variance with himself[36]. He is neither brute enough to enjoy his appetites, nor man enough to govern them. He knows and feels that what he pursues is not his true good; his reflection serving only to shew him that misery which his habitual sloth and indolence will not suffer him to remedy. At length, being grown odious to himself, and abhorring his own company, he runs into every idle assembly, not from the hopes of pleasure, but merely to respite the pain of his own mind. Listless and uneasy at the present, he hath no delight in reflecting on what is past, or in the prospect of anything to come. This man of pleasure, when, after a wretched scene of vanity and woe, his animal nature is worn to the stumps, wishes and dreads death by turns, and is sick of living, without having ever tried or known the true life of man.

Euph. It is well this sort of life, which is of so little benefit to the owner, conduceth so much to that of the public. But pray tell me, do these gentlemen set up for minute philosophers?

Cri. That sect, you must know, contains two sorts of philosophers, the wet and the dry. Those I have been describing are of the former kind. They differ rather in practice than in theory. As an older, graver, or duller man, from one that is younger, and more capable or fond of pleasure. The dry philosopher passeth his time but dryly. He has the honour of pimping for the vices of more sprightly men, who in return offer some small incense to

[35] Dial. III. sect. 12.

[36] *Magna Moralia*, II. 6.

his vanity. Upon this encouragement, and to make his own mind easy when it is past being pleased, he employs himself in justifying those excesses he cannot partake in. But, to return to your question, those miserable folk are mighty men for the minute philosophy.

Euph. What hinders them then from putting an end to their lives?

Cri. Their not being persuaded of the truth of what they profess. Some, indeed, in a fit of despair, do now and then lay violent hands on themselves. And as the minute philosophy prevails, we daily see more examples of suicide. But they bear no proportion to those who would put an end to their lives if they durst[37]. My friend Clinias, who had been one of them, and a philosopher of rank, let me into the secret history of their doubts, and fears, and irresolute resolutions of making away with themselves, which last he assures me is a frequent topic with men of pleasure, when they have drunk themselves into a little spirit. It was by virtue of this mechanical valour the renowned philosopher Hermocrates shot himself through the head. The same thing hath since been practised by several others, to the great relief of their friends. Splenetic, worried, and frightened out of their wits, they run upon their doom with the same courage as a bird runs into the mouth of a rattle-snake, not because they are bold to die, but because they are afraid to live. Clinias endeavoured to fortify his irreligion by the discourse and opinion of other minute philosophers, who were mutually strengthened in their unbelief by his. After this manner, authority working in a circle, they endeavoured to atheize one another. But, though he pretended even to a demonstration against the being of a God[38], yet he could not inwardly conquer his own belief. He fell sick, and acknowledged this truth, is now a sober man and a good Christian; owns he was never so happy as since he has become such, nor so wretched as while he was a minute philosopher. And he who has tried both conditions may be allowed a proper judge of both.

Lys. Truly a fine account of the brightest and bravest men of the age!

[37] Cf. *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, sect. 5, and note on *Philosophical Dissertation upon Death*. See also the Preface to Gildon's *Oracles of Reason*.

[38] Cf. 'Advertisement;' also 'Editor's Preface,' p. 5.

Cri. Bright and brave are fine attributes. But our curate is of opinion that all you free-thinking rakes are either fools or cowards. Thus he argues: if such a man doth not see his true interest, he wants sense; if he doth, but dare not pursue it, he wants courage. In this manner, from the defect of sense and courage, he deduceth that whole species of men, who are so apt to value themselves upon both those qualities.

Lys. As for their courage, they are at all times ready to give proof of it; and for their understanding, thanks to nature, it is of a size not to be measured by country parsons.

18. *Euph.* But Socrates, who was no country parson, suspected your men of pleasure were such through ignorance.

Lys. Ignorance of what?

Euph. Of the art of computing. It was his opinion that rakes cannot reckon[39]. And that for want of this skill they make wrong judgments about pleasure, on the right choice of which their happiness depends.

Lys. I do not understand you.

Euph. Do you grant that sense perceiveth only sensible things?

Lys. I do.

Euph. Sense perceiveth only things present?

Lys. This too I grant.

Euph. Future pleasures, therefore, and pleasures of the understanding are not to be judged of by actual sense?

Lys. They are not.

Euph. Those therefore who judge of pleasure by sense may find themselves mistaken at the foot of the account.

> Cum lapidosa chiragra
> Contudit articulos veteris ramalia fagi,
> Tum crassos transisse dies lucemque palustrem,
> Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam[40].

To make a right computation, should you not consider all the faculties, and all the kinds of pleasure, taking into your account the future as well as the present, and rating them all according to their true value?

Cri. The Epicureans themselves allowed that pleasure which procures a greater pain, or hinders a greater pleasure, should be

[39] [Plato in Protag.]—Author.

[40] [Persius, Sat. V.]—Author.

regarded as a pain; and, that pain which procures a greater pleasure, or prevents a greater pain, is to be accounted a pleasure[41]. In order therefore to make a true estimate of pleasure, the great spring of action, and that from whence the conduct of life takes its bias, we ought to compute intellectual pleasures and future pleasures, as well as present and sensible; we ought to make allowance, in the valuation of each particular pleasure, for all the pains and evils, for all the disgust, remorse, and shame, that attend it; we ought to regard both kind and quantity, the sincerity, the intenseness, and the duration of pleasures.

Euph. And, all these points duly considered, will not Socrates seem to have had reason on his side, when he thought ignorance made rakes—and particularly their being ignorant of what he calls the science of more and less, greater and smaller, equality and comparison, that is to say, of the art of computing?

Lys. All this discourse seems notional. For real abilities of every kind, it is well known, we have the brightest men of the age among us. But all those who know the world do calculate that what you call a good Christian, who hath neither a large conscience, nor unprejudiced mind, must be unfit for the affairs of it. Thus you see, while you compute yourselves out of pleasure, others compute you out of business. What then are you good for with all your computation?

Euph. I have all imaginable respect for the abilities of free-thinkers. My only fear was, their parts might be too lively for such slow talents as forecast and computation, the gifts of ordinary men.

19. *Cri.* I cannot make them the same compliment that Euphranor does. For, though I shall not pretend to characterise the whole sect, yet thus much I may truly affirm—that those who have fallen in my way have been mostly raw men of pleasure, old sharpers in business, or a third sort of lazy sciolists, who are neither men of business, nor men of speculation, but set up for judges or critics in all kinds, without having made a progress in any. These, among men of the world, pass for profound theorists,

[41] Cicero, *De Finibus*, I. And the modern Utilitarians recognise contrasts in the *quality* as well as in the quantity of our pleasures. Mr. Mill, in his *Utilitarianism*, insists frequently upon their generic differences.

and among speculative men would seem to know the world: a conceited race, equally useless to the affairs and studies of mankind. Such as these, for the most part, seem to be sectaries of the minute philosophy. I will not deny that now and then you may meet with a man of easy manners, that, without those faults and affectations, is carried into the party by the mere stream of education, fashion, or company; all which do in this age prejudice men against religion, even those who mechanically rail at prejudice. I must not forget that the minute philosophers have also a strong party among the beaux and fine ladies; and, as affectations out of character are often the strongest, there is nothing so dogmatical and inconvincible as one of these fine things, when it sets up for free-thinking. But, be these professors of the sect never so dogmatical, their authority must needs be small with men of sense. For who would choose for his guide, in the search for truth, a man whose thoughts and time are taken up with dress, visits, and diversions? or whose education hath been behind the counter, or in an office? or whose speculations have been employed on the forms of business, who is only well read in the ways and commerce of mankind, in stockjobbing, purloining, supplanting, bribing? Or would any man in his senses give a fig for meditations and discoveries made over a bottle? And yet it is certain that, instead of thought, books, and study, most free-thinkers are the proselytes of a drinking club. Their principles are often settled, and decisions on the deepest points made, when they are not fit to make a bargain.

Lys. You forget our writers, Crito. They make a world of proselytes.

Cri. So would worse writers in such a cause. Alas! how few read! and of these, how few are able to judge! How many wish your notions true! How many had rather be diverted than instructed! How many are convinced by a title! I may allow your reasons to be effectual, without allowing them to be good. Arguments, in themselves of small weight, have great effect, when they are recommended by a mistaken interest, when they are pleaded for by passion, when they are countenanced by the humour of the age; and above all, with some sort of men, when they are against law, government, and established opinions: things which, as a wise and good man would not depart from without clear

evidence, a weak or a bad man will affect to disparage on the slightest grounds.

Lys. And yet the arguments of our philosophers alarm.

Cri. The force of their reasoning is not what alarms: their contempt of laws and government is alarming: their application to the young and ignorant is dangerous.

Euph. But without disputing or disparaging their talent at ratiocination, it seems very possible their success might not be owing to that alone. May it not in some measure be ascribed to the defects of others, as well as to their own perfections? My friend Eucrates used to say, that the church would thrive and flourish beyond all opposition, if some certain persons minded piety more than politics, practics than polemics, fundamentals than consectaries, substance than circumstance, things than notions, and notions than words.

Lys. Whatever may be the cause, the effects are too plain to be denied. And when a considering man observes that our notions do, in this most learned and knowing age, spread and multiply, in opposition to established laws, and every day gain ground against a body so numerous, so learned, so well supported, protected, and encouraged, for the service and defence of religion: I say, when a man observes and considers all this, he will be apt to ascribe it to the force of truth, and the merits of our cause; which, had it been supported with the revenues and establishments of the church and universities, you may guess what a figure it would make, by the figure that it makes without them.

Euph. It is much to be pitied that the learned professors of your sect do not meet with the encouragement they deserve.

Lys. All in due time. People begin to open their eyes. It is not impossible but those revenues that in ignorant times were applied to a wrong use may, hereafter, in a more enlightened age, be applied to a better.

Cri. But why professors and encouragement for what needs no teaching? An acquaintance of mine has a most ingenious footman that can neither write nor read, who learned your whole system in half an hour: he knows when and how to nod, shake his head, smile, and give a hint, as well as the ablest sceptic, and is in fact a very minute philosopher.

Lys. Pardon me, it takes time to unlearn religious prejudices, and requires a strong head.

Cri. I do not know how it might have been once upon a time. But in the present laudable education, I know several who have been imbued with no religious notions at all; and others who have had them so very slight, that they rubbed off without the least pains.

20. Panope, young and beautiful, under the care of her aunt, an admirer of the minute philosophy, was kept from learning the principles of religion, that she might not be accustomed to believe without a reason, nor assent to what she did not comprehend. Panope was not indeed prejudiced with religious notions, but got a notion of intriguing, and a notion of play, which ruined her reputation by fourteen, and her fortune by four-and-twenty.—I have often reflected on the different fate of two brothers in my neighbourhood. Cleon, the elder, being designed an accomplished gentleman, was sent to town, and had the first part of his education in a great school: what religion he learned there was soon unlearned in a certain celebrated society, which, till we have a better, may pass for a nursery of minute philosophers. Cleon dressed well, could cheat at cards, had a nice palate, understood the mystery of the die, was a mighty man in the minute philosophy; and having shined a few years in these accomplishments, he died before thirty, childless and rotten, expressing the utmost indignation that he could not outlive that old dog his father; who, having a great notion of polite manners, and knowledge of the world, had purchased them to his favourite son with much expense, but had been more frugal in the education of Chærephon, the younger son; who was brought up at a country school, and entered a commoner in the university, where he qualified himself for a parsonage in his father's gift, which he is now possessed of, together with the estate of the family, and a numerous offspring.

Lys. A pack of unpolished cubs, I warrant.

Cri. Less polished, perhaps, but more sound, more honest, and more useful, than many who pass for fine gentlemen. Crates, a worthy justice of the peace in this country, having had a son miscarry at London, by the conversation of a minute philosopher, used to say, with a great air of complaint—If a man spoils my

corn, or hurts my cattle, I have a remedy against him; but if he spoils my children I have none.

Lys. I warrant you he was for penal methods: he would have had a law to persecute tender consciences.

Cri. The tender conscience of a minute philosopher! He who tutored the son of Crates soon after did justice on himself. For he taught Lycidas, a modest young man, the principles of his sect. Lycidas, in return, debauched his daughter, an only child: upon which, Charmides (that was the minute philosopher's name) hanged himself. Old Bubalion in the city is carking, starving, and cheating, that his son may drink, game, and keep mistresses, hounds, and horses, and die in a jail. Bubalion nevertheless thinks himself wise, and passeth for one that minds the main chance. He is a minute philosopher, which learning he acquired behind the counter, from the works of Prodicus and Tryphon. This same Bubalion was one night at supper, talking against the immortality of the soul, with two or three grave citizens, one of whom the next day declared himself a bankrupt, with five thousand pounds of Bubalion's in his hands: and the night following he received a note from a servant, who had during his lecture waited at table, demanding the sum of fifty guineas to be laid under a stone, and concluding with most terrible threats and imprecations.

Lys. Not to repeat what hath been already demonstrated[42]—that the public is at bottom no sufferer by such accidents, which in truth are inconvenient only to private persons, who in their turn too may reap the benefit of them; I say, not to repeat all that hath been demonstrated on that head, I shall only ask you whether there would not be rakes and rogues, although we did not make them? Believe me, the world always was, and always will be the same, as long as men are men.

Cri. I deny that the world is always the same. Human nature, to use Alciphron's comparison, is like land, better or worse, as it is improved, and according to the seeds or principles sown in it. Though nobody held your tenets, I grant there might be bad men by the force of corrupt appetites and irregular passions; but, where men, to the force of appetite and passion, add that of opinion, and are wicked from principle, there will be more

[42] Cf. sect. 2.

men wicked, and those more incurably and outrageously so. The error of a lively rake lies in his passions, and may be reformed: but the dry rogue who sets up for judgment is incorrigible. It is an observation of Aristotle's, that there are two sorts of debauchees, the ἀκρατής, and the ἀκόλαστος, of which the one is so against his judgment, the other with it[43]; and that there may be hopes of the former, but none of the latter. And in fact I have always observed, that a rake who is a minute philosopher, when grown old, becomes a sharper in business.

Lys. I could name you several such who have grown most noted patriots.

Cri. Patriots! such patriots as Catiline and Mark Anthony.

Lys. And what then? Those famous Romans were brave, though unsuccessful. They wanted neither sense nor courage; and if their schemes had taken effect, the brisker part of their countrymen had been much the better for them.

21. The wheels of government go on, though wound up by different hands; if not in the same form, yet in some other, perhaps a better. There is an endless variety in nature. Weak men, indeed, are prejudiced towards rules and systems in life and government; and think if these are gone all is gone: but a man of a great soul and free spirit delights in the noble experiment of blowing up systems and dissolving governments, to mould them anew upon other principles and in another shape. Take my word for it, there is a plastic nature in things that seeks its own end. Pull a state to pieces, jumble, confound, and shake together the particles of human society, and then let them stand a while, and you shall soon see them settle of themselves in some convenient order, where heavy heads are lowest, and men of genius uppermost.

Euph. Lysicles speaks his mind freely.

Lys. Where was the advantage of free-thinking, if it were not attended with free-speaking; or of free-speaking, if it did not produce free-acting? We are for thorough, independent, original freedom. Inward freedom without outward is good for nothing but to set a man's judgment at variance with his practice.

[43] See *Nicom. Ethics*, VII. 1; also Butler in his *Sermons*.

Cri. This free way of Lysicles may seem new to you: it is not so to me. As the minute philosophers lay it down for a maxim—that there is nothing sacred of any kind, nothing but what may be made a jest of, exploded, and changed like the fashion of their clothes; so nothing is more frequent than for them to utter their schemes and principles, not only in select companies, but even in public.

In a certain part of the world, where ingenious men are wont to retail their speculations, I remember to have seen a valetudinarian in a long wig and a cloak, sitting at the upper end of a table, with half a dozen disciples about him. After he had talked about religion, in a manner and with an air that would make one think atheism established by law, and religion only tolerated, he entered upon civil government; and observed to his audience, that the natural world was in a perpetual circulation. Animals, said he, who draw their sustenance from the earth, mix with that same earth, and in their turn become food for vegetables, which again nourish the animal kind: the vapours that ascend from this globe descend back upon it in showers; the elements alternately prey upon each other: that which one part of nature loseth another gains; the sum total remaining always the same, being neither bigger nor lesser, better nor worse, for all these intestine changes. Even so, said this learned professor, the revolutions in the civil world are no detriment to human-kind; one part whereof rises as the other falls, and wins by another's loss. A man therefore who thinks deeply, and hath an eye on the whole system, is no more a bigot to government than to religion. He knows how to suit himself to occasions, and make the best of every event: for the rest, he looks on all translations of power and property from one hand to another with a philosophic indifference. Our lecturer concluded his discourse with a most ingenious analysis of all political and moral virtues into their first principles and causes, shewing them to be mere fashions, tricks of state, and illusions on the vulgar.

Lys. We have been often told of the good effects of religion and learning, churches and universities: but I dare affirm that a dozen or two ingenious men of our sect have done more towards advancing real knowledge, by extemporaneous lectures, in the

compass of a few years, than all the ecclesiastics put together for as many centuries.

Euph. And the nation no doubt thrives accordingly; but it seems, Crito, you have heard them discourse.

Cri. Upon hearing this, and other lectures of the same tendency, methought it was needless to establish professors for the minute philosophy in either university; while there are so many spontaneous lecturers in every corner of the streets, ready to open men's eyes, and rub off their prejudices about religion, loyalty, and public spirit.

Lys. If wishing was to any purpose, I could wish for a telescope that might draw into my view things future in time, as well as distant in place. Oh! that I could but look into the next age, and behold what it is that we are preparing to be, the glorious harvest of our principles: the spreading of which hath produced a visible tendency in the nation towards something great and new.

Cri. One thing I dare say you would expect to see, be the changes and agitations of the public what they will, that is, every free-thinker upon his legs. You are all sons of nature, who cheerfully follow the fortunes of the common mass.

Lys. And it must be owned we have a maxim—that *each should take care of one.*

Cri. Alas, Lysicles, you wrong your own character. You would feign pass upon the world, and upon yourselves, for interested cunning men: but can anything be more disinterested than to sacrifice all regards to the abstracted speculation of truth? Or can anything be more void of all cunning than to publish your discoveries to the world, teach others to play the whole game, and arm mankind against yourselves?

22. If a man may venture to suggest so mean a thought as the love of their country to souls fired with the love of truth, and the love of liberty, and grasping the whole extent of nature; I would humbly propose it to you, gentlemen, to observe the caution practised by all other discoverers, projectors, and makers of experiments, who never hazard all on the first trial. Would it not be prudent to try the success of your principles on a small model in some remote corner? For instance, set up a colony

of atheists in Monomotapa, and see how it prospers, before you proceed any farther at home: half a dozen ship-loads of minute philosophers might easily be spared upon so good a design. In the meantime, you gentlemen, who have found out that there is nothing to be hoped or feared in another life, that conscience is a bug-bear, that the bands of government and the cement of human society are rotten things, to be resolved and crumbled into nothing by the argumentation of every minute philosopher: be so good as to keep these sublime discoveries to yourselves: suffer us, our wives, our children, our servants, and our neighbours, to continue in the belief and way of thinking established by the laws of our country. In good earnest, I wish you would go try your experiments among the Hottentots or Turks.

Lys. The Hottentots we think well of, believing them to be an unprejudiced people: but it is to be feared their diet and customs would not agree with our philosophers. As for the Turks, they are bigots, who have a notion of God, and a respect for Jesus Christ; I question whether it might be safe to venture among them.

Cri. Make your experiment then in some other part of Christendom.

Lys. We hold all other Christian nations to be much under the power of prejudice: even our neighbours the Dutch are too much prejudiced in favour of their religion by law established for a prudent man to attempt innovations under their government. Upon the whole, it seems we can execute our schemes nowhere with so much security and such prospect of success as at home. Not to say that we have already made a good progress. Oh! that we could but once see a parliament of true, staunch, libertine free-thinkers!

Cri. God forbid! I should be sorry to have such men for my servants, not to say, for my masters.

Lys. In that we differ.

23. But you will agree with me that the right way to come at this was to begin with extirpating the prejudices of particular persons. We have carried on this work for many years with much art and industry, and at first with secrecy, working like moles under ground, concealing our progress from the public, and our ultimate views from many, even of our own proselytes,

blowing the coals between polemical divines, laying hold on and improving every incident which the passions and folly of churchmen afforded to the advantage of our sect. As our principles obtained, we still proceeded to farther inferences; and as our numbers multiplied, we gradually disclosed ourselves and our opinions: where we are now I need not say. We have stubbed, and weeded, and cleared human nature to that degree that, in a little time, leaving it alone without any labouring or teaching, you shall see natural and just ideas sprout forth of themselves.

Cri. But I have heard a man, who had lived long and observed much, remark, that the worst and most unwholesome weed was this same minute philosophy. We have had, said he, divers epidemical distempers in the state, but this hath produced of all others the most destructive plague. Enthusiasm had its day, its effects were violent and soon over; this infects more quietly, but spreads widely: the former bred a fever in the state; this breeds a consumption and final decay. A rebellion or an invasion alarms, and puts the public upon its defence; but a corruption of principles works its ruin more slowly perhaps, but more surely.

This may be illustrated by a fable I somewhere met with in the writings of a Swiss philosopher, setting forth the original of brandy and gunpowder. The government of the north being once upon a time vacant, the prince of the power of the air convened a council in hell, wherein, upon competition between two demons of rank, it was determined they should both make trial of their abilities, and he should succeed who did most mischief. One made his appearance in the shape of gunpowder, the other in that of brandy: the former was a declared enemy, and roared with a terrible noise, which made folks afraid, and put them on their guard; the other passed as a friend and a physician through the world, disguised himself with sweets, and perfumes, and drugs, made his way into the ladies' cabinets and the apothecaries' shops, and, under the notion of helping digestion, comforting the spirits, and cheering the heart, produced direct contrary effects; and, having insensibly thrown great numbers of human-kind into a lingering but fatal decay, was found to people hell and the grave so fast as to merit the government which he still possesses.

24. *Lys.* Those who please may amuse themselves with fables

and allegories. This is plain English:—liberty is a good thing, and we are the support of liberty.

Cri. To me it seems that liberty and virtue were made for each other. If any man wish to enslave his country, nothing is a fitter preparative than vice; and nothing leads to vice so surely as irreligion. For my part, I cannot comprehend or find out, after having considered it in all lights, how this crying down religion should be the effect of honest views towards a just and legal liberty. Some seem to propose an indulgence in vice; others may have in prospect the advantage which needy and ambitious men are used to make in the ruin of a state. One may indulge a pert petulant spirit; another hope to be esteemed among libertines, when he wants wit to please, or abilities to be useful. But, be men's views what they will, let us examine what good your principles have done: who has been the better for the instructions of these minute philosophers? Let us compare what we are in respect of learning, loyalty, honesty, wealth, power, and public spirit, with what we have been. Free-thinking (as it is called) hath wonderfully grown of late years. Let us see what hath grown up with it, or what effects it hath produced. To make a catalogue of ills is disagreeable; and the only blessing it can pretend to is luxury: that same blessing which revenged the world upon old Rome; that same luxury that makes a nation, like a diseased pampered body, look full and fat with one foot in the grave.

Lys. You mistake the matter. There are no people who think and argue better about the public good of a state than our sect; who have also invented many things tending to that end which we cannot as yet conveniently put in practice.

Cri. But one point there is from which it must be owned the public hath already received some advantage, which is the effect of your principles, flowing from them, and spreading as they do: I mean that old Roman practice of self-murder, which at once puts an end to all distress, ridding the world and themselves of the miserable.

Lys. You were pleased before to make some reflections on this custom, and laugh at the irresolution of our free-thinkers: but I can aver for matter of fact that they have often recommended it by their example as well as arguments[18]; and that it is solely

[18] e.g. in the *Philosophy of Death.*

owing to them that a practice, so useful and magnanimous, hath been taken out of the hands of lunatics, and restored to that credit among men of sense which it anciently had. In whatever light you may consider it, this is in fact a solid benefit. But the best effect of our principles is that light and truth so visibly shed abroad in the world. From how many prejudices, errors, perplexities, and contradictions have we freed the minds of our fellow-subjects! How many hard words and intricate absurd notions had possessed the minds of men before our philosophers appeared in the world! But now even women and children have right and sound notions of things. What say you to this, Crito?

Cri. I say, with respect to these great advantages of destroying men and notions, that I question whether the public gains as much by the latter as it loseth by the former. For my own part, I had rather my wife and children all believed what they had no notion of, and daily pronounced words without a meaning, than that any one of them should cut his throat, or leap out of a window. Errors and nonsense, as such, are of small concern in the eyes of the public; which considers not the metaphysical truth of notions, so much as the tendency they have to produce good or evil. Truth itself is valued by the public, as it hath an influence, and is felt in the course of life. You may confute a whole shelf of schoolmen, and discover many speculative truths, without any great merit towards your country. But if I am not mistaken, the minute philosophers are not the men to whom we are most beholden for discoveries of that kind: this I say must be allowed, supposing, what I by no means grant, your notions to be true. For, to say plainly what I think, the tendency of your opinions is so bad that no good man can endure them, and your arguments for them so weak that no wise man will admit them.

Lys. Has it not been proved as clear as the meridian sun that the politer sort of men lead much happier lives, and swim in pleasure, since the spreading of our principles? But, not to repeat or insist further on what has been so amply deduced, I shall only add that the advantages flowing from them extend to the tenderest age and the softer sex: our principles deliver children from terrors by night, and ladies from splenetic hours by day. Instead of these old-fashioned things, prayers and the Bible, the

grateful amusements of drams, dice, and billet-doux have succeeded. The fair sex have now nothing to do but dress and paint, drink and game, adorn and divert themselves, and enter into all the sweet society of life.

Cri. I thought, Lysicles, the argument from pleasure had been exhausted. But, since you have not done with that point, let us once more, by Euphranor's rule, cast up the account of pleasure and pain, as credit and debt, under distinct articles. We will set down in the life of your fine lady rich clothes, dice, cordials, scandal, late hours, against vapours, distaste, remorse, losses at play, and the terrible distress of ill-spent age increasing every day: suppose no cruel accident of jealousy, no madness or infamy of love, yet, at the foot of the account, you shall find that empty, giddy, gaudy, fluttering thing, not half so happy as a butterfly or a grasshopper on a summer's day. And for a rake or man of pleasure, the reckoning will be much the same, if you place listlessness, ignorance, rottenness, loathing, craving, quarrelling, and such qualities or accomplishments, over against his little circle of fleeting amusements—long woe against momentary pleasure; and if it be considered that, when sense and appetite go off, though he seek refuge from his conscience in the minute philosophy, yet in this you will find, if you sift him to the bottom, that he affects much, believes little, knows nothing.

Upon which, Lysicles, turning to me, observed, that Crito might dispute against fact if he pleased, but that every one must see the nation was the merrier for their principles.

True, answered Crito, we are a merry nation indeed: young men laugh at the old; children despise their parents; and subjects make a jest of the government: happy effects of the minute philosophy!

25. *Lys.* Infer what effects you please: that will not make our principles less true.

Cri. Their *truth* is not what I am now considering. The point at present is the *usefulness* of your principles. And to decide this point we need only take a short view of them fairly proposed and laid together:—that there is no God or providence: that man is as the beasts that perish: that his happiness as theirs consists in obeying animal instincts, appetites, and passions: that all stings

of conscience and sense of guilt are prejudices and errors of education: that religion is a state trick: that vice is beneficial to the public: that the soul of man is corporeal, and dissolveth like a flame or vapour: that man is a machine actuated according to the laws of motion: that consequently he is no agent, or subject of guilt: that a wise man will make his own particular individual interest in this present life the rule and measure of all his actions: —these, and such opinions, are, it seems, the tenets of a minute philosopher, who is himself, according to his own principles, an organ played on by sensible objects, a ball bandied about by appetites and passions: so subtle is he as to be able to maintain all this by artful reasonings; so sharp-sighted and penetrating to the very bottom of things as to find out that the most interested occult cunning is the only true wisdom. To complete his character, this curious piece of clock-work, having no principle of action within itself, and denying that it hath or can have any one free thought or motion, sets up for the patron of liberty, and earnestly contends for *free-thinking*.

Crito had no sooner made an end but Lysicles addressed himself to Euphranor and me—Crito, said he, has taken a world of pains, but convinced me only of one single point, to wit, that I must despair of convincing him. Never did I in the whole course of my life meet with a man so deeply immersed in prejudice; let who will pull him out for me. But I entertain better hopes of you.

I can answer, said I, for myself, that my eyes and ears are always open to conviction: I am attentive to all that passes, and upon the whole shall form, whether right or wrong, a very impartial judgment.

Crito, said Euphranor, is a more enterprising man than I, thus to rate and lecture a philosopher. For my part, I always find it easier to learn than to teach. I shall therefore beg your assistance to rid me of some scruples about the tendency of your opinions; which I find myself unable to master, though never so willing. This done, though we should not tread exactly in the same steps, nor perhaps go the same road, yet we shall not run in all points diametrically opposite one to another.

26. Tell me now, Lysicles, you who are a minute observer of

things, whether a shade be more agreeable at morning, or evening, or noon-day?

Lys. Doubtless at noon-day.

Euph. And what disposeth men to rest?

Lys. Exercise.

Euph. When do men make the greatest fires?

Lys. In the coldest weather.

Euph. And what creates a love for icy liquors?

Lys. Excessive heat.

Euph. What if you raise a pendulum to a great height on one side?

Lys. It will, when left to itself, ascend so much the higher on the other.

Euph. It should seem, therefore, that darkness ensues from light, rest from motion, heat from cold, and in general that one extreme is the consequence of another?

Lys. It should seem so.

Euph. And doth not this observation hold in the civil as well as natural world? Doth not power produce licence, and licence power? Do not whigs make tories, and tories whigs. Bigots make atheists, and atheists bigots[49]?

Lys. Granting this to be true.

Euph. Will it not hence follow that as we abhor slavish principles we should avoid running into licentious ones? I am and always was a sincere lover of liberty, legal English liberty; which I esteem a chief blessing, ornament, and comfort of life, and the great prerogative of an Englishman. But is it not to be feared that, upon the nation's running into a licentiousness which hath never been endured in any civilised country, men feeling the intolerable evils of one extreme may naturally fall into the other? You must allow the bulk of mankind are not philosophers, like you and Alciphron.

Lys. This I readily acknowledge.

Euph. I have another scruple about the tendency of your opinions. Suppose you should prevail, and destroy this protestant church and clergy: how could you come at the popish? I am credibly informed there is a great number of emissaries of the church of Rome disguised in England: who can tell what harvest

[49] Cf. Dial. V. sect. 29.

a clergy so numerous, so subtle, and so well furnished with arguments to work on vulgar and uneducated minds, may be able to make in a country despoiled of all religion, and feeling the want of it? Who can tell whether the spirit of free-thinking ending with the opposition, and the vanity with the distinction, when the whole nation are alike infidels; who can tell, I say, whether in such a juncture the men of genius themselves may not affect a new distinction, and be the first converts to popery?

Lys. And suppose they should. Between friends it would be no great matter. These are our maxims. In the first place, we hold it would be best to have no religion at all. Secondly, we hold that all religions are indifferent. If, therefore, upon trial, we find the country cannot do without a religion, why not popery as well as another? I know several ingenious men of our sect, who, if we had a popish prince on the throne, would turn papists to-morrow. This is a paradox, but I shall explain it. A prince whom we compliment with our religion, to be sure must be grateful.

Euph. I understand you. But what becomes of free-thinking all the while?

Lys. Oh! we should have more than ever of that, for we should keep it all to ourselves. As for the amusement of retailing it, the want of this would be largely compensated by solid advantages of another kind.

Euph. It seems then, by this account, the tendency you observed in the nation towards something great and new proves a tendency towards popery and slavery.

Lys. Mistake us not, good Euphranor. The thing first in our intention is consummate liberty: but, if this will not do, and there must after all be such things tolerated as religion and government, we are wisely willing to make the best of both.

Cri. This puts me in mind of a thought I have often had—that minute philosophers are dupes of the Jesuits. The two most avowed, professed, busy, propagators of infidelity, in all companies, and upon all occasions, that I ever met with, were both bigoted papists; and, being both men of considerable estates, suffered considerably on that score; which it is wonderful their thinking disciples should never reflect upon. Hegemon, a most distinguished writer among the minute philosophers, and hero of

the sect, I am well assured, was once a papist, and never heard that he professed any other religion. I know that many of the church of Rome abroad are pleased with the growth of infidelity among us, as hoping it may make way for them. The emissaries of Rome are known to have personated several other sects, which from time to time have sprung up amongst us; and why not this of the minute philosophers, of all others the best calculated to ruin both church and state? I myself have known a Jesuit abroad talk among English gentlemen like a free-thinker. I am credibly informed that Jesuits, known to be such by the minute philosophers at home, are admitted into their clubs, and I have observed them to approve, and speak better of the Jesuits than of any other clergy whatsoever. Those who are not acquainted with the subtle spirit, the refined politics, and wonderful economy, of that renowned society, need only read the account given of them by the Jesuit Inchofer, in his book *De Monarchiâ Solipsorum*; and those who are will not be surprised they should be able to make dupes of our minute philosophers: dupes, I say, for I can never think they suspect they are only tools to serve the ends of cunninger men than themselves. They seem to me drunk and giddy with a false notion of liberty, and spurred on by this principle to make mad experiments on their country; they agree only in pulling down all that stands in their way; without any concerted scheme, and without caring or knowing what to erect in its stead. To hear them, as I have often done, descant on the moral virtues, resolve them into shame, then laugh at shame as a weakness, admire the unconfined lives of savages[50], despise all order and decency of education—one would think the intention of these philosophers was, when they had pruned and weeded the notions of their fellow-subjects, and divested them of their prejudices, to strip them of their clothes, and fill the country with naked followers of nature, enjoying all the privileges of brutality.

Here Crito made a pause, and fixed his eyes on Alciphron, who during this whole conversation had sat thoughtful and attentive, without saying a word; and with an air one while dissatisfied at what Lysicles advanced, another serene and pleased, seeming to

[50] Cf. Berkeley's *Discourse addressed to Magistrates*, sect. 21.

approve some better thought of his own. But the day being now far spent, Alciphron proposed to adjourn the argument till the following; when, said he, I shall set matters on a new foundation, and in so full and clear a light, as, I doubt not, will give entire satisfaction. So we changed the discourse, and after a repast upon cold provisions, took a walk on the strand, and in the cool of the evening returned to Crito's.

THE THIRD DIALOGUE[51].

1. Alciphron's account of honour. 2. Character and conduct of men of honour. 3. Sense of moral beauty. 4. The honestum or τὸ καλὸν of the ancients. 5. Taste for moral beauty—whether a sure guide or rule. 6. Minute philosophers ravished with the abstract beauty of virtue. 7. Their virtue alone disinterested and heroic. 8. Beauty of sensible objects—what, and how perceived. 9. The idea of beauty explained by painting and architecture. 10. Beauty of the moral system, wherein it consists. 11. It supposeth a Providence. 12. Influence of τὸ καλὸν and τὸ πρέπον. 13. Enthusiasm of Cratylus compared with the sentiments of Aristotle. 14. Compared with the Stoical principles. 15. Minute philosophers, their talent for raillery and ridicule. 16. The wisdom of those who make virtue alone its own reward.

1. THE following day, as we sat round the tea-table, in a summer parlour which looks into the garden, Alciphron after the first dish turned down his cup, and, reclining back on his chair, proceeded as follows—Above all the sects upon earth, it is the peculiar privilege of ours, not to be tied down by any principles. While other philosophers profess a servile adherence to certain tenets, ours assert a noble freedom, differing not only one from another, but very often the same man from himself. Which method of proceeding, beside other advantages, hath this annexed to it, that we are of all men the hardest to confute. You may, perhaps, confute a particular tenet, but then this affects only him who maintains it, and so long only as he maintains it. Some of our sect dogmatize more than others, and in some more than other points. The doctrine of the usefulness of vice is a point wherein we are not all agreed. Some of us are great admirers of virtue.

[51] The preceding Dialogue having vindicated virtue, by exposing the theory of the utility of vice, this one, directed against Shaftesbury, is meant to shew the insufficiency of a moral taste or sense, and of the abstract beauty of virtue, for establishing practical morals, and regulating the actions of men. This suggests the need for Religion, with its awful sense of the constant presence and moral government of God, and faith in a future life. Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* should be compared with this Dialogue.

For Berkeley's own general principles of Ethics, his *Discourse on Passive Obedience* —published twenty years before *Alciphron*— should be referred to. That the 'general well-being of all men, of all nations, of all ages of the world' is what the infinitely good God intends to be promoted 'by the concurring actions of each individual'—that this end is to be accomplished by the observance of universal rules which have a corresponding tendency—and that faith in Divine moral government and man's immortality is necessary to make the rules efficacious, are among its fundamental principles. It is a system of Theological Utilitarianism.

With others the points of vice and virtue are problematical. For my part, though I think the doctrine maintained yesterday by Lysicles an ingenious speculation; yet upon the whole, there are divers reasons which incline me to depart from it, and rather to espouse the virtuous side of the question; with the smallest, perhaps, but the most contemplative and laudable part of our sect. It seemeth, I say, after a nice inquiry and balancing on both sides, that we ought to prefer virtue to vice; and that such preference would contribute both to the public weal, and the reputation of our philosophers.

You are to know then, we have among us several that, without one grain of religion, are men of the nicest honour, and therefore men of virtue because men of honour. Honour is a noble unpolluted source of virtue, without the least mixture of fear, interest, or superstition. It hath all the advantages without the evils which attend religion. It is the mark of a great and fine soul, and is to be found among persons of rank and breeding. It affects the court, the senate, and the camp, and in general every rendezvous of people of fashion.

Euph. You say then that honour is the source of virtue?

Alc. I do.

Euph. Can a thing be the source of itself?

Alc. It cannot.

Euph. The source, therefore, is distinguished from that of which it is the source?

Alc. Doubtless.

Euph. Honour then is one thing, and virtue another?

Alc. I grant it. Virtuous actions are the effect, and honour is the source or cause of that effect.

Euph. Tell me. Is honour the will producing those actions, or the final cause for which they are produced; or right reason which is their rule and limit, or the object about which they are conversant? Or do you by the word *honour* understand a faculty or appetite? all which are supposed, in one sense or other, to be the source of human actions.

Alc. Nothing of all this.

Euph. Be pleased then to give me some notion or definition of it.—Alciphron, having mused a while, answered, that he defined honour to be a principle of virtuous actions.

To which Euphranor replied:—If I understand it rightly, the word *principle* is variously taken. Sometimes by principles we mean the parts of which a whole is composed, and into which it may be resolved. Thus the elements are said to be principles of compound bodies. And thus words, syllables, and letters are the principles of speech. Sometimes by principle we mean a small particular seed, the growth or gradual unfolding of which doth produce an organized body, animal or vegetable, in its proper size and shape. Principles at other times are supposed to be certain fundamental theorems in arts and sciences, in religion and politics. Let me know in which of these senses, or whether it be in some other sense, that you understand this word, when you say —honour is a principle of virtue.

To this Alciphron replied, that for his part he meant it in none of those senses, but defined honour to be a certain ardour or enthusiasm that glowed in the breast of a gallant man.

Upon this, Euphranor observed, it was always admitted to put the definition in place of the thing defined. Is this allowed, said he, or not?

Alc. It is.

Euph. May we not therefore say, that a man of honour is a warm man, or an enthusiast?

Alciphron, hearing this, declared that such exactness was to no purpose; that pedants, indeed, may dispute and define, but could never reach that high sense of honour which distinguished the fine gentleman, and was a thing rather to be felt than explained.

2. Crito, perceiving that Alciphron could not bear being pressed any farther on that article, and willing to give some satisfaction to Euphranor, said that of himself indeed he should not undertake to explain so nice a point, but he would retail to them part of a conversation he once heard between *Nicander* a minute philosopher and *Menecles* a Christian, upon the same subject, which was for substance as follows.

M. From what principle are you gentlemen virtuous?

N. From honour. We are men of honour.

M. May not a man of honour debauch another's wife, or get drunk, or sell a vote, or refuse to pay his debts, without lessening or tainting his honour?

N. He may have the vices and faults of a gentleman: but is obliged to pays debts of honour, that is, all such as are contracted by play.

M. Is not your man of honour always ready to resent affronts and engage in duels?

N. He is ready to demand and give gentleman's satisfaction upon all proper occasions.

M. It should seem, by this account, that to ruin tradesmen, break faith to one's own wife, corrupt another man's, take bribes, cheat the public, cut a man's throat for a word, are all points consistent with your principle of honour.

N. It cannot be denied that we are men of gallantry, men of fire, men who know the world, and all that.

M. It seems therefore that honour among infidels is like honesty among pirates—something confined to themselves, and which the fraternity perhaps may find their account in, but every one else should be constantly on his guard against.

By this dialogue, continued Crito, a man who lives out of the *grand monde* may be enabled to form some notion of what the world calls honour, and men of honour.

Euph. I must entreat you not to put me off with Nicander's opinion, whom I know nothing of, but rather give me your own judgment, drawn from your own observation upon men of honour.

Cri. If I must pronounce, I can very sincerely assure you that, by all I have heard or seen, I could never find that honour, considered as a principle distinct from conscience, religion, reason, and virtue, was more than an empty name. And I do verily believe that those who build upon that notion have less virtue than other men; and that what they have, or seem to have, is owing to fashion (being of the reputable kind), if not to a conscience early imbued with religious principles, and afterwards retaining a tincture from them without knowing it. These two principles seem to account for all that looks like virtue in those gentlemen. Your men of fashion, in whom animal life abounds, a sort of bullies in morality, who disdain to have it thought they are afraid of conscience—these descant much upon honour, and affect to be called men of honour, rather than conscientious or honest men. But, by all that I could ever observe, this specious character, where there is nothing of conscience or religion underneath, to

give it life and substance, is no better than a meteor or painted cloud.

Euph. I had a confused notion that honour was something connected with truth; and that men of honour were the greatest enemies to all hypocrisy, fallacy, and disguise.

Cri. So far from that, an infidel, who sets up for the nicest honour, shall, without the least grain of faith or religion, pretend himself a Christian, take any test, join in any act of worship, kneel, pray, receive the sacrament, to serve an interest[52]. The same person, without any impeachment of his honour, shall most solemnly declare and promise, in the face of God and the world, that he will love his wife, and forsaking all others keep only to her, when at the same time it is certain he intends never to perform one tittle of his vow; and convinceth the whole world of this as soon as he gets her in his power, and her fortune, for the sake of which this man of untainted honour makes no scruple to cheat and lie.

Euph. We have a notion here in the country that it was of all things most odious, and a matter of much risk and hazard, to give the lie to a man of honour.

Cri. It is very true. He abhors to take the lie, but not to tell it.

3. [53]Alciphron, having heard all this with great composure of mind and countenance, spake as follows:—You are not to think that our greatest strength lies in our greatest number—libertines, and mere men of honour. No: we have among us philosophers of a very different character—men of curious contemplation, not governed by such gross things as sense and custom, but of an abstracted virtue and sublime morals: and the less religious the more virtuous. For virtue of the high and disinterested kind no man is so well qualified as an infidel; it being a mean and selfish thing to be virtuous through fear or hope. The notion of a Providence, and future state of rewards and punishments, may indeed tempt or scare men of abject spirit into practices contrary to the natural bent of their souls, but will never produce a true and

[52] Cf. Dial. I. sect. 12.

[53] Alciphron here introduces and explains the theory of Shaftesbury and other enthusiasts for an original sense of Moral Beauty, which is discussed in what follows of this Dialogue.

genuine virtue. To go to the bottom of things, to analyse virtue into its first principles, and fix a scheme of duty on its true basis, you must understand that there is an Idea of Beauty natural to the mind of man. This all men desire, this they are pleased and delighted with for its own sake, purely from an instinct of nature. A man needs no arguments to make him discern and approve what is beautiful; it strikes at first sight, and attracts without a reason. And as this beauty is found in the shape and form of corporeal things; so also is there analogous to it a beauty of another kind—an order, a symmetry, and comeliness, in the moral world. And as the eye perceiveth the one, so the mind doth, by a certain interior sense[54], perceive the other; which sense, talent, or faculty is ever quickest and purest in the noblest minds. Thus, as by sight I discern the beauty of a plant or an animal, even so the mind apprehends the moral excellence, the beauty, and decorum of justice and temperance. And as we readily pronounce a dress becoming, or an attitude graceful, we can, with the same free untutored judgment, at once declare whether this or that conduct or action be comely and beautiful. To relish this kind of beauty there must be a delicate and fine taste; but, where there is this natural taste, nothing further is wanting, either as a principle to convince, or as a motive to induce men to the love of virtue. And more or less there is of this taste or sense in every creature that hath reason. All rational beings are by nature social. They are drawn one towards another by natural affections. They unite and incorporate into families, clubs, parties, and commonwealths by mutual sympathy. As, by means of the sensitive soul, our several distinct parts and members do consent towards the animal functions, and are connected in one whole; even so, the several parts of these rational systems or bodies politic, by virtue of this moral or interior sense, are held together, have a fellow feeling, do succour and protect each other, and jointly co-operate towards the same end. Hence that joy in society, that propension towards doing good to our kind, that gratulation and delight in beholding the virtuous deeds of other men, or in reflecting on our own. By contemplation of the fitness and order of the parts of a moral system, regularly operating, and knit together by benevolent affections, the mind of man attaineth to the highest notion of

[54] Cf. sect. 5.

beauty, excellence, and perfection. Seized and rapt with this sublime idea, our philosophers do infinitely despise and pity whoever shall propose or accept any other motive to virtue. Interest is a mean ungenerous thing, destroying the merit of virtue; and falsehood of every kind is inconsistent with the genuine spirit of philosophy.

Cri. The love therefore that you bear to moral beauty, and your passion for abstracted truth, will not suffer you to think with patience of those fraudulent impositions upon mankind—Providence, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future Retribution of rewards and punishments; which, under the notion of promoting, do, it seems, destroy all true virtue, and at the same time contradict and disparage your noble theories, manifestly tending to the perturbation and disquiet of men's minds, and filling them with fruitless hopes and vain terrors[55].

Alc. Men's first thoughts and natural notions are the best in moral matters. And there is no need that mankind should be preached, or reasoned, or frightened into virtue, a thing so natural and congenial to every human soul. Now, if this be the case, as it certainly is, it follows that all the ends of society are secured without Religion, and that an infidel bids fair to be the most virtuous man, in a true, sublime, and heroic sense.

4. *Euph.* O Alciphron, while you talk, I feel an affection in my soul like the trembling of one lute upon striking the unison strings of another. Doubtless there is a beauty of the mind, a charm in virtue, a symmetry and proportion in the moral world. This moral beauty was known to the ancients by the name of *honestum*, or τὸ καλὸν[56]. And, in order to know its force and influence, it may not be amiss to inquire, what it was understood to be, and what light it was placed in, by those who first considered it, and gave it a name. Τὸ καλὸν, according to Aristotle, is the ἐπαινετὸν or *laudable*; according to Plato, it is the ἡδὺ or ὠφέλιμον, *pleasant* or *profitable*, which is meant with respect to a reasonable mind and its true interest. Now, I would feign know whether

[55] Many, not all, of the free-thinking party disowned immortality, and professed to follow virtue for its own sake, without regard to future retribution.

[56] 'The beautiful' (τὸ καλὸν), applied ethically, is deeply characteristic of Greek morality, with its fine artistic feeling.

a mind which considers an action as laudable be not carried beyond the bare action itself, to regard the opinion of others concerning it?

Alc. It is.

Euph. And whether this be a sufficient ground or principle of virtue, for a man to act upon, when he thinks himself removed from the eye and observation of every other intelligent being?

Alc. It seems not.

Euph. Again: I ask whether a man who doth a thing pleasant or profitable, as such, might not be supposed to forbear doing it, or even to do the contrary, upon the prospect of greater pleasure or profit?

Alc. He might.

Euph. Doth it not follow from hence that the beauty of virtue, or τὸ καλὸν, in either Aristotle's or Plato's sense, is not a sufficient principle or ground to engage sensual and worldly-minded men in the practice of it?

Alc. What then?

Euph. Why then it will follow that hope of reward and fear of punishment are highly expedient to cast the balance of pleasant and profitable on the side of virtue, and thereby very much conduce to the benefit of human society.

Alciphron upon this appealed:—Gentlemen, said he, you are witnesses of this unfair proceeding of Euphranor, who argues against us from explications given by Plato and Aristotle of the beauty of virtue, which are things we have nothing to say to; the philosophers of our sect abstracting from all praise, pleasure, and interest, when they are enamoured and transported with that sublime idea.

I beg pardon, replied Euphranor, for supposing the minute philosophers of our days think like those ancient sages. But you must tell me, Alciphron, since you do not think fit to adopt the sense of Plato or Aristotle, what sense it is in which you understand the beauty of virtue. Define it, explain it, make me to understand your meaning, that so we may argue about the same thing, without which we can never come to a conclusion.

5. *Alc.* Some things are better understood by definitions and descriptions; but I have always observed that those who would

define, explain, and dispute about this point make the least of it. Moral beauty is of so peculiar and abstracted a nature, something so subtle, fine, and fugacious, that it will not bear being handled and inspected, like every gross and common subject. You will, therefore, pardon me if I stand upon my philosophic liberty; and choose rather to intrench myself within the general and indefinite sense, rather than, by entering into a precise and particular explication of this beauty, perchance lose sight of it; or give you some hold whereon to cavil, and infer, and raise doubts, queries, and difficulties about a point as clear as the sun, when nobody reasons upon it.

Euph. How say you, Alciphron, is that notion clearest when it is not considered?

Alc. I say it is rather to be felt than understood—a certain *je ne sais quoi*. An object, not of the discursive faculty, but of a peculiar sense, which is properly called the *moral sense*[57], being adapted to the perception of moral beauty, as the eye to colours, or the ear to sounds.

Euph. That men have certain instinctive sensations or passions from nature, which make them amiable and useful to each other, I am clearly convinced. Such are a fellow-feeling with the distressed, a tenderness for our offspring, an affection towards our friends, our neighbours, and our country, an indignation against things base, cruel, or unjust. These passions are implanted in the human soul, with several other fears and appetites, aversions and desires, some of which are strongest and uppermost in one mind, others in another. Should it not therefore seem a very uncertain guide in morals, for a man to follow his passion or inward feeling; and would not this rule infallibly lead different men different ways, according to the prevalency of this or that appetite or passion?

Alc. I do not deny it.

Euph. And will it not follow from hence that duty and virtue are in a fairer way of being practised, if men are led by reason

[57] The term 'moral sense' (*sensus decori et honesti* of ancient moralists) came into current use about the time Berkeley wrote—as a designation for conscience, regarded as cognizant of the morality of actions in a way analogous to the perception of the qualities of matter in the external senses. It is so employed by Shaftesbury, in his *Inquiry concerning Virtue* (1699); and afterwards frequently by Francis Hutcheson, in his *Inquiry into the Origin of Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), and his *Illustrations upon the Moral Sense* (1728).

and judgment, balancing low and sensual pleasures with those of a higher kind, comparing present losses with future gains, and the uneasiness and disgust of every vice with the delightful practice of the opposite virtue, and the pleasing reflections and hopes which attend it? Or can there be a stronger motive to virtue than the shewing that, considered in all lights, it is every man's true interest?

6. *Alc.* I tell you, Euphranor, we contemn the virtue of that man who computes and deliberates, and must have a reason for being virtuous. The refined moralists of our sect are ravished and transported with the abstract beauty of virtue. They disdain all forensic motives to it; and love virtue only for virtue's sake. Oh rapture! oh enthusiasm! oh the quintessence of beauty! methinks I could dwell for ever on this contemplation: but, rather than entertain myself, I must endeavour to convince you. Make an experiment on the first man you meet. Propose a villainous or unjust action. Take his first sense of the matter, and you shall find he detests it. He may, indeed, be afterwards misled by arguments, or overpowered by temptation; but his original, unpremeditated, and genuine thoughts are just and orthodox. How can we account for this but by a moral sense, which, left to itself, hath as quick and true a perception of the beauty and deformity of human actions as the eye hath of colours?

Euph. May not this be sufficiently accounted for by conscience, affection, passion, education, reason, custom, religion; which principles and habits, for aught I know, may be what you metaphorically call a moral sense?

Alc. What I call a moral sense is strictly, properly, and truly such, and in kind different from all those things you enumerate. It is what all men have, though all may not observe it.

Upon this Euphranor smiled and said—Alciphron has made discoveries where I least expected it. For, said he, in regard to every other point I should hope to learn from him; but for the knowledge of myself, or the faculties and powers of my own mind, I should have looked at home. And there I might have looked long enough without finding this new talent, which even now, after being tutored, I cannot comprehend. For Alciphron, I must needs say, is too sublime and enigmatical upon a point

which of all others ought to be most clearly understood. I have often heard that your deepest adepts and oldest professors in science are the obscurest. Lysicles is young, and speaks plain. Would he but favour us with his sense of this point, it might perhaps prove more upon a level with my apprehension.

7. Lysicles shook his head, and in a grave and earnest manner addressed the company.—Gentlemen, said he, Alciphron stands upon his own legs. I have no part in these refined notions he is at present engaged to defend. If I must subdue my passions, abstract, contemplate, be enamoured of virtue; in a word, if I must be an enthusiast, I owe so much deference to the laws of my country as to choose being an enthusiast in their way. Besides, it is better being so for some end than for none. This doctrine hath all the solid inconveniences, without the amusing hopes and prospects, of the Christian.

Alc. I never counted on Lysicles for my second in this point; which after all doth not need his assistance or explication. All subjects ought not to be treated in the same manner. The way of definition and division is dry and pedantic. Besides, the subject is sometimes too obscure, sometimes too simple for this method. One while we know too little of a point, another too much, to make it plainer by discourse.

Cri. To hear Alciphron talk puts me in mind of that ingenious Greek who, having wrapped a man's brother up in a cloak, asked him whether he knew that person; being ready, either by keeping on or pulling off the cloak, to confute his answer whatever it should be. For my part, I believe, if matters were fairly stated, that rational satisfaction, that peace of mind, that inward comfort, and conscientious joy, which a good Christian finds in good actions, would not be found to fall short of all the ecstasy, rapture, and enthusiasm supposed to be the effect of that high and undescribed principle. In earnest, can any ecstasy be higher, any rapture more affecting, than that which springs from the love of God and man, from a conscience void of offence, and an inward discharge of duty, with the secret delight, trust, and hope that attend it?

Alc. O Euphranor, we votaries of truth do not envy but pity the groundless joys and mistaken hopes of a Christian. And, as

for conscience and rational pleasure, how can we allow a conscience without allowing a vindictive Providence? Or how can we suppose the charm of virtue consists in any pleasure or benefit attending virtuous actions, without giving great advantages to the Christian religion, which, it seems, excites its believers to virtue by the highest interests and pleasures in reversion. Alas! should we grant this, there would be a door opened to all those rusty declaimers upon the necessity and usefulness of the great points of Faith—the immortality of the soul, a future state, rewards and punishments, and the like exploded conceits; which, according to our system and principles, may perhaps produce a low, popular, interested kind of virtue, but must absolutely destroy and extinguish it in the sublime and heroic sense.

8. *Euph.* What you now say is very intelligible: I wish I understood your main principle as well.

Alc. And are you then in earnest at a loss? Is it possible you should have no notion of beauty, or that having it you should not know it to be amiable—amiable I say, in itself, and for itself?

Euph. Pray tell me, Alciphron, are all mankind agreed in the notion of a beauteous face?

Alc. Beauty in human-kind seems to be of a mixed and various nature; forasmuch as the passions, sentiments, and qualities of the soul, being seen through and blending with the features, work differently on different minds, as the sympathy is more or less. But with regard to other things is there no steady principle of beauty? Is there upon earth a human mind without the idea of order, harmony, and proportion?

Euph. O Alciphron, it is my weakness that I am apt to be lost and bewildered in abstractions and generalities, but a particular thing is better suited to my faculties[58]. I find it easy to consider and keep in view the objects of sense: let us therefore try to discover what their beauty is, or wherein it consists; and so, by the help of these sensible things[59], as a scale or ladder, ascend to moral and intelligible beauty. Be pleased then to inform me, what is it we call beauty in the objects of sense?

[58] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, Introduction, sect. 6–17.

[59] Cf. *Siris*, in its general conception. What follows, in this and the next section, relates to the theory of beauty in the sensible world, and especially in architecture.

Alc. Every one knows beauty is that which pleases.

Euph. There is then beauty in the smell of a rose, or the taste of an apple?

Alc. By no means. Beauty is, to speak properly, perceived only by the eye.

Euph. It cannot therefore be defined in general—that which pleaseth?

Alc. I grant it cannot.

Euph. How then shall we limit or define it?

Alciphron, after a short pause, said that beauty consisted in a certain symmetry or proportion pleasing to the eye.

Euph. Is this proportion one and the same in all things, or is it different in different kinds of things?

Alc. Different, doubtless. The proportions of an ox would not be beautiful in a horse. And we may observe also in things inanimate, that the beauty of a table, a chair, a door, consists in different proportions.

Euph. Doth not this proportion imply the relation of one thing to another?

Alc. It doth.

Euph. And are not these relations founded in size and shape?

Alc. They are.

Euph. And, to make the proportions just, must not those mutual relations of size and shape in the parts be such as shall make the whole complete and perfect in its kind?

Alc. I grant they must.

Euph. Is not a thing said to be perfect in its kind when it answers the end for which it was made?

Alc. It is.

Euph. The parts, therefore, in true proportions must be so related, and adjusted to one another, as that they may best conspire to the use and operation of the whole?

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. But the comparing parts one with another, the considering them as belonging to one whole, and referring this whole to its use or end, should seem the work of *reason*: should it not?

Alc. It should.

Euph. Proportions, therefore, are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the sense of sight, but only by reason through the means of sight.

Alc. This I grant.

Euph. Consequently beauty, in your sense of it, is an object, not of the eye, but of the mind.

Alc. It is.

Euph. The eye, therefore, alone cannot see that a chair is handsome, or a door well proportioned.

Alc. It seems to follow; but I am not clear as to this point.

Euph. Let us see if there be any difficulty in it. Could the chair you sit on, think you, be reckoned well proportioned or handsome, if it had not such a height, breadth, wideness, and was not so far reclined as to afford a convenient seat?

Alc. It could not.

Euph. The beauty, therefore, or symmetry of a chair cannot be apprehended but by knowing its use, and comparing its figure with that use; which cannot be done by the eye alone, but is the effect of judgment. It is, therefore, one thing to *see* an object, and another to *discern its beauty.*

Alc. I admit this to be true.

9. *Euph.* The architects judge a door to be of a beautiful proportion, when its height is double of the breadth. But if you should invert a well-proportioned door, making its breadth become the height, and its height the breadth, the figure would still be the same, but without that beauty in one situation which it had in another. What can be the cause of this, but that, in the forementioned supposition, the door would not yield convenient entrances to creatures of a human figure? But, if in any other part of the universe there should be supposed rational animals of an inverted stature, they must be supposed to invert the rule for proportion of doors; and to them that would appear beautiful which to us was disagreeable.

Alc. Against this I have no objection.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, is there not something truly decent and beautiful in dress?

Alc. Doubtless, there is.

Euph. Are any likelier to give us an idea of this beauty in dress than painters and sculptors, whose proper business and study it is to aim at graceful representations?

Alc. I believe not.

Euph. Let us then examine the draperies of the great masters in these arts: how, for instance, they use to clothe a matron, or a man of rank. Cast an eye on those figures (said he, pointing to some prints after Raphael and Guido, that hung upon the wall) —what appearance do you think an English courtier or magistrate, with his Gothic, succinct, plaited garment, and his full-bottomed wig; or one of our ladies in her unnatural dress, pinched and stiffened and enlarged, with hoops and whale-bone and buckram, must make, among those figures so decently clad in draperies that fall into such a variety of natural, easy, and ample folds, that appear with so much dignity and simplicity, that cover the body without encumbering it, and adorn without altering the shape?

Alc. Truly I think they must make a very ridiculous appearance.

Euph. And what do you think this proceeds from? Whence is it that the Eastern nations, the Greeks, and the Romans, naturally ran into the most becoming dresses; while our Gothic gentry, after so many centuries racking their inventions, mending, and altering, and improving, and whirling about in a perpetual rotation of fashions, have never yet had the luck to stumble on any that was not absurd and ridiculous? Is it not from hence —that, instead of consulting use, reason, and convenience, they abandon themselves to irregular fancy, the unnatural parent of monsters? Whereas the ancients, considering the use and end of dress, made it subservient to the freedom, ease, and convenience of the body; and, having no notion of mending or changing the natural shape, they aimed only at shewing it with decency and advantage. And, if this be so, are we not to conclude that the beauty of dress depends on its subserviency to certain ends and uses?

Alc. This appears to be true.

Euph. This subordinate relative nature of beauty, perhaps, will be yet plainer, if we examine the respective beauties of a horse and a pillar. Virgil's description of the former is—

> Illi ardua cervix,
> Argutumque caput, brevis alvus, obesaque terga,
> Luxuriatque toris animosum pectus.

Now, I would fain know whether the perfections and uses of a horse may not be reduced to these three points, courage, strength,

and speed; and whether each of the beauties enumerated doth not occasion or betoken one of these perfections? After the same manner, if we inquire into the parts and proportions of a beautiful pillar, we shall perhaps find them answer to the same idea. Those who have considered the theory of architecture tell us[60] the proportions of the three Grecian orders were taken from the human body, as the most beautiful and perfect production of nature. Hence were derived those graceful ideas of columns, which had a character of strength without clumsiness, or of delicacy without weakness. Those beautiful proportions were, I say, taken originally from nature, which, in her creatures, as hath been already observed, referreth them to some end, use, or design. The *gonfiezza* also, or swelling, and the diminution of a pillar, is it not in such proportion as to make it appear strong and light at the same time? In the same manner, must not the whole entablature, with its projections, be so proportioned, as to seem great but not heavy, light but not little; inasmuch as a deviation into either extreme would thwart that reason and use of things wherein their beauty is founded, and to which it is subordinate? The entablature, and all its parts and ornaments, architrave, frieze, cornice, triglyphs, metopes, modiglions, and the rest, have each a use or appearance of use, in giving firmness and union to the building, in protecting it from the weather and casting off the rain, in representing the ends of beams with their intervals, the production of rafters, and so forth. And if we consider the graceful angles in frontispieces, the spaces between the columns, or the ornaments of their capitals—shall we not find, that their beauty riseth from the appearance of use, or the imitation of natural things, whose beauty is originally founded on the same principle? which is, indeed, the grand distinction between Grecian and Gothic architecture; the latter being fantastical, and for the most part founded neither in nature nor in reason, in necessity nor use, the appearance of which accounts for all the beauty, grace, and ornament of the other.

Cri. What Euphranor has said confirms the opinion I always entertained—that the rules of architecture were founded, as all

[60] [See the learned Patriarch of Aquileia's Commentary on Vitruvius, lib. IV. cap. 1.] —Author. Berkeley's taste in architecture, fostered in Italy, has been already referred to. Cf. Dial. II. sect. 15, note.

other arts which flourished among the Greeks, in truth, and nature, and good sense. But the ancients, who, from a thorough consideration of the grounds and principles of art, formed their idea of beauty, did not always confine themselves strictly to the same rules and proportions; but, whenever the particular distance, position, elevation, or dimension of the fabric or its parts seemed to require it, made no scruple to depart from them, without deserting the original principles of beauty, which governed whatever deviations they made. This latitude or licence might not, perhaps, be safely trusted with most modern architects, who in their bold sallies seem to act without aim or design; and to be governed by no idea, no reason, or principle of art, but pure caprice, joined with a thorough contempt of that noble simplicity of the ancients, without which there can be no unity, gracefulness, or grandeur in their works; which of consequence must serve only to disfigure and dishonour the nation, being so many monuments to future ages of the opulence and ill taste of the present; which, it is to be feared, would succeed as wretchedly, and make as mad work in other affairs, were men to follow, instead of rules, precepts, and morals, their own taste and first thoughts of beauty.

Alc. I should now, methinks, be glad to see a little more distinctly the use and tendency of this digression upon architecture.

Euph. Was not beauty the very thing we inquired after?

Alc. It was.

Euph. What think you, Alciphron, can the appearance of a thing please at this time, and in this place, which pleased two thousand years ago, and two thousand miles off, without some real principle of beauty?

Alc. It cannot.

Euph. And is not this the case with respect to a just piece of architecture?

Alc. Nobody denies it.

Euph. Architecture, the noble offspring of judgment and fancy, was gradually formed in the most polite and knowing countries of Asia, Egypt, Greece, and Italy. It was cherished and esteemed by the most flourishing states and most renowned princes, who with vast expense improved and brought it to per-

fection. It seems, above all other arts, peculiarly conversant about order, proportion, and symmetry. May it not therefore be supposed, on all accounts, most likely to help us to some rational notion of the *je ne sais quoi* in beauty? And, in effect, have we not learned from this digression that, as there is no beauty without proportion, so proportions are to be esteemed just and true, only as they are relative to some certain use or end, their aptitude and subordination to which end is, at bottom, that which makes them please and charm?

Alc. I admit all this to be true.

10. *Euph.* According to this doctrine, I would fain know what beauty[61] can be found in a moral system, formed, connected, and governed by chance, fate, or any other blind unthinking principle? Forasmuch as without thought there can be no end or design; and without an end there can be no use; and without use there is no aptitude or fitness of proportion, from whence beauty springs.

Alc. May we not suppose a certain vital principle of beauty, order, and harmony, diffused throughout the world, without supposing a Providence inspecting, punishing, and rewarding the moral actions of men; without supposing the immortality of the soul, or a life to come; in a word, without admitting any part of what is commonly called Faith, Worship, and Religion?

Cri. Either you suppose this principle intelligent, or not intelligent: if the latter, it is all one with chance or fate, which was just now argued against: if the former, let me entreat Alciphron to explain to me wherein consists the beauty of a moral system, with a supreme Intelligence at the head of it which neither protects the innocent, punishes the wicked, nor rewards the virtuous. To suppose indeed a society of rational agents, acting under the eye of Providence, concurring in one design to promote the common benefit of the whole, and conforming their actions to the established laws and order of the Divine parental wisdom: wherein each particular agent shall not consider himself apart, but as the member of a great City, whose author and founder is God: in which the civil laws are

[61] The analogy between the sense of beauty and the moral sense is suggested by Hutcheson (who combines them in his *Inquiry*), as well as by Shaftesbury.

no other than the rules of virtue and the duties of religion: and where every one's true interest is combined with his duty: —to suppose this would be delightful: on this supposition a man need be no Stoic or knight-errant, to account for his virtue. In such a system, vice is madness, cunning is folly, wisdom and virtue are the same thing; where, notwithstanding all the crooked paths and by-roads, the wayward appetites and inclinations of men, sovereign reason is sure to reform whatever seems amiss, to reduce that which is devious, make straight that which is crooked, and, in the last act, wind up the whole plot according to the exactest rules of wisdom and justice. In such a system or society, governed by the wisest precepts, enforced by the highest rewards and discouragements, it is delightful to consider how the regulation of laws, the distribution of good and evil, the aim of moral agents, do all conspire in due subordination to promote the noblest end, to wit, the complete happiness or well-being of the whole. In contemplating the beauty of such a moral system, we may cry out with the Psalmist—'Very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.'

11. In a system of spirits, subordinate to the will, and under the direction of the Father of spirits, governing them by laws, and conducting them by methods suitable to wise and good ends, there will be great beauty. But in an incoherent fortuitous system, governed by chance, or in a blind system, governed by fate, or in any system where Providence doth not preside, how can beauty be, which cannot be without order, which cannot be without design? When a man is conscious that his will is inwardly conformed to the Divine will, producing order and harmony in the universe, and conducting the whole by the justest methods to the best end: this gives a beautiful idea. But, on the other hand, a consciousness of virtue overlooked, neglected, distressed by men, and not regarded or rewarded by God, ill-used in this world, without hope or prospect of being better used in another—I would fain know where is the pleasure of this reflection, where is the beauty of this scene? Or, how could any man in his senses think the spreading such notions the way to spread or propagate virtue in the world? Is it not, I beseech you, an ugly system in which you can suppose no law and prove

no duty, wherein men thrive by wickedness and suffer by virtue? Would it not be a disagreeable sight to see an honest man peeled by sharpers, to see virtuous men injured and despised while vice triumphed? An enthusiast may entertain himself with visions and fine talk about such a system; but when it comes to be considered by men of cool heads and close reason, I believe they will find no beauty nor perfection in it; nor will it appear that such a moral system can possibly come from the same hand, or be of a piece with the natural, throughout which there shine so much order, harmony, and proportion.

Alc. Your discourse serves to confirm me in my opinion. You may remember, I declared that touching this beauty of morality in the high sense, a man's first thoughts are the best; and that, if we pretend to examine, inspect, and reason, we are in danger to lose sight of it. That in fact there is such a thing cannot be doubted, when we consider that in these days some of our philosophers have a high sense of virtue, without the least notion of religion—a clear proof of the usefulness and efficacy of our principles!

12. *Cri.* Not to dispute the virtue of minute philosophers, we may venture to call its cause in question, and make a doubt whether it be an inexplicable enthusiastic notion of moral beauty, or rather, as to me it seems, what was already assigned by Euphranor—complexion, custom, and religious education? But, allowing what beauty you please to virtue in an irreligious system, it cannot be less in a religious, unless you will suppose that her charms diminish as her dowry increaseth. The truth is, a believer hath all the motives from the beauty of virtue in any sense whatsoever that an unbeliever can possibly have, besides other motives which an unbeliever hath not. Hence, it is plain those of your sect who have moral virtue owe it not to their peculiar tenets, which serve only to lessen the motives to virtue. Those, therefore, who are good are less good, and those who are bad are more bad, than they would have been were they believers.

Euph. To me it seems those heroic infidel inamoratos of abstracted beauty are much to be pitied, and much to be admired.

Lysicles hearing this, said with some impatience:—Gentlemen,

you shall have my whole thoughts upon this point plain and frank. All that is said about a moral sense, or moral beauty, in any signification, either of Alciphron, or Euphranor, or any other, I take to be at bottom mere bubble and pretence. The καλὸν and the πρέπον, the *beautiful* and *decent*, are things outward, relative, and superficial, which have no effect in the dark, but are specious topics to discourse and expatiate upon, as some formal pretenders of our sect, though in other points very orthodox, are used to do. But should one of them get into power, you would find him no such fool as Euphranor imagines. He would soon shew he had found out that the love of one's country is a prejudice: that mankind are rogues and hypocrites, and that it were folly to sacrifice one's-self for the sake of such: that all regards centre in this life, and that, as this life is to every man his own life, it clearly follows that charity begins at home. Benevolence to mankind is perhaps pretended, but benevolence to himself is practised by the wise. The livelier sort of our philosophers do not scruple to own these maxims; and as for the graver, if they are true to their principles, one may guess what they must think at the bottom.

Cri. Whatever may be the effect of pure theory upon certain select spirits, of a peculiar make, or in some other parts of the world, I do verily think that in this country of ours, reason, religion, and law are all together little enough to subdue the outward to the inner man; and that it must argue a wrong head and weak judgment to suppose that without them men will be enamoured of the golden mean. To which my countrymen perhaps are less inclined than others, there being in the make of an English mind[62] a certain gloom and eagerness, which carries to the sad extreme—religion to fanaticism; free-thinking to atheism; liberty to rebellion: nor should we venture to be governed by taste, even in matters of less consequence. The beautiful in dress, furniture, and building is, as Euphranor hath observed, something real and well grounded: and yet our English do not find it out of themselves. What wretched work do they and other northern people make when they follow their own taste of beauty in any of these particulars, instead of acquiring the true, which is to be got from ancient models and the principles of art, as

[62] Cf. Dial. II. sect. 17.

in the case of virtue from great models and meditation, so far as natural means can go? But in no case is it to be hoped that τὸ καλὸν will be the leading idea of the many, who have quick senses, strong passions, and gross intellects.

13. *Alc.* The fewer they are the more ought we to esteem and admire such philosophers, whose souls are touched and transported with this sublime idea.

Cri. But then one might expect from such philosophers so much good sense and philanthropy as to keep their tenets to themselves, and consider their weak brethren, who are more strongly affected by certain senses and notions of another kind than that of the beauty of pure disinterested virtue.

Cratylus[63], a man prejudiced against the Christian religion, of a crazy constitution, of a rank above most men's ambition, and a fortune equal to his rank, had little capacity for sensual vices, or temptation to dishonest ones. Cratylus, having talked himself, or imagined that he had talked himself, into a stoical enthusiasm about the beauty of virtue, did, under the pretence of making men heroically virtuous, endeavour to destroy the means of making them reasonably and humanly so: a clear instance that neither birth, nor books, nor conversation can introduce a knowledge of the world into a conceited mind, which will ever be its own object, and contemplate mankind in its own mirror!

Alc. Cratylus was a lover of liberty, and of his country, and had a mind to make men incorrupt and virtuous upon the purest and most disinterested principles.

Cri. [[64]It is true the main scope of all his writings (as he himself tells us) was to assert the reality of a beauty and charm in moral as well as in natural subjects; to demonstrate a taste which he thinks more effectual than principle; to recommend morals on the same foot with manners; and so to advance philosophy on the very foundation of what is called agreeable and polite. As for religious qualms—the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments, and such matters—this great man sticks not to declare that the liberal, polished, and refined part of mankind

[63] Shaftesbury.

[64] What follows, within brackets, was added in the second edition, but has been omitted in the collected editions of Berkeley's Works.

must needs consider them only as children's tales and amusements of the vulgar. For the sake therefore of the better sort, he hath, in great goodness and wisdom, thought of something else, to wit, a *taste* or *relish*: this, he assures us, is at least what will influence; since, according to him, whoever has any impression of gentility (as he calls it) or politeness, is so acquainted with the decorum and grace of things as to be readily transported with the contemplation thereof[65].] His conduct seems just as wise as if a monarch should give out that there was neither jail nor executioner in his kingdom to enforce the laws, but that it would be beautiful to observe them, and that in so doing men would taste the pure delight which results from order and decorum.

Alc. After all, is it not true that certain ancient philosophers, of great note, held the same opinion with Cratylus, declaring that he did not come up to the character, or deserve the title of a good man, who practised virtue for the sake of anything but its own beauty?

Cri. I believe, indeed, that some of the ancients said such things as gave occasion for this opinion.

Aristotle[66] distinguisheth between two characters of a good man—the one he calleth ἀγαθὸς, or simply *good*; the other καλὸς κἀγαθὸς, from whence the compound term καλοκἀγαθία, which cannot, perhaps, be rendered by any one word in our language. But his sense is plainly this:—ἀγαθὸς he defineth to be, that man to whom the good things of nature are good: for, according to him, those things which are vulgarly esteemed the greatest goods, as riches, honours, power, and bodily perfections, are indeed good by nature, but they happen nevertheless to be hurtful and bad to some persons, upon the account of evil habits; inasmuch as neither a fool, nor an unjust man, nor an intemperate, can be at all the better for the use of them, any more than a sick man for using the nourishment proper for those who are in health. But καλὸς κἀγαθὸς is that man in whom are to be found all things worthy and decent and laudable, purely as such and for their own sake, and who practiseth virtue from no other motive than the sole love of her own innate beauty. That philosopher observes likewise that

[65] [See *Characteristics*, vol. III. Miscel. 5, cap. 2; Miscel. 3, cap. 2.]—Author.

[66] [*Ethic. ad Eudemum*, lib. VII. cap. ult.] —Author.

there is a certain political habit, such as the Spartans and others had, who thought virtue was to be valued and practised on account of the natural advantages that attend it. For which reason, he adds, they are indeed good men, but they have not the καλοκἀγαθία, or supreme consummate virtue.—From hence it is plain that, according to Aristotle, a man may be a good man without believing virtue its own reward, or being only moved to virtue by the sense of moral beauty. It is also plain that he distinguisheth the political virtues of nations, which the public is everywhere concerned to maintain, from this sublime and speculative kind.

It might also be observed that his exalted idea did consist with supposing a Providence which inspects and rewards the virtues of the best men. For, saith he, in another place[66]—If the gods have any care of human affairs, as it appears they have[67], it should seem reasonable to suppose they are most delighted with the most excellent nature, and most approaching their own, which is the mind, and that they will reward those who chiefly love and cultivate what is most dear to them. The same philosopher observes[68], that the bulk of mankind are not naturally disposed to be awed by shame, but by fear; nor to abstain from vicious practices on account of their deformity, but only of the punishment which attends them. And again[69], he tells us that youth, being of itself averse from abstinence and sobriety, should be under the restraint of laws regulating their education and employment, and that the same discipline should be continued even after they became men. For which, saith he, we want laws, and, in one word, for the whole ordering of life; inasmuch as the generality of mankind obey rather force than reason, and are influenced rather by penalties than the beauty of virtue (ζημίαις ἢ τῷ καλῷ).

From all which, it is very plain what Aristotle would have thought of those who should go about to lessen or destroy the

[66] [*Ad Nicom.* lib. X. cap. 8.]—Author.

[67] 'as it appears they have'—ὥσπερ δοκεῖ, in the original, which merely indicates that the opinion of a Divine Providence is held, but without pronouncing upon its truth or falsehood. Aristotle, unlike Plato, generally evades a decision about the immortality of the soul and a future life, (cf. *Nicom. Ethics*, I. 10, 11; III. 6,)—or at least views the problems of Ethics as unaffected by a regard to such matters, virtue being superior to the accidents of time. Aristotle and Shaftesbury, accordingly, are here more akin than Crito allows.

[68] [*Ad Nicom.* lib. X. cap. 10.]—Author.

[69] [*Ad Nicom.* lib. X. cap. 9.]—Author.

hopes and fears of mankind, in order to make them virtuous on this sole principle of the beauty of virtue.

14. *Alc.* But, whatever the Stagirite and his Peripatetics might think, is it not certain that the Stoics maintained this doctrine in its highest sense, asserting the beauty of virtue to be all-sufficient, that virtue was her own reward, that this alone could make a man happy, in spite of all those things which are vulgarly esteemed the greatest woes and miseries of human life? And all this they held at the same time that they believed the soul of man to be of a corporeal nature, and in death dissipated like a flame or vapour.

Cri. It must be owned the Stoics sometimes talk as if they believed the mortality of the soul[70]. Seneca, in a letter of his to Lucilius, speaks much like a minute philosopher in this particular. But, in several other places, he declares himself of a clear contrary opinion, affirming that the souls of men after death mount aloft into the heavens, look down upon earth, entertain themselves with the theory of celestial bodies, the course of nature, and the conversation of wise and excellent men, who, having lived in distant ages and countries upon earth, make one society in the other world.

It must also be acknowledged that Marcus Antoninus sometimes speaks of the soul as perishing, or dissolving into its elementary parts. But it is to be noted that he distinguisheth three principles in the composition of human nature—the σῶμα, ψυχὴ, νοῦς[71], *body*, *soul*, *mind*; or, as he otherwise expresseth himself—σαρκία, πνευμάτιον, and ἡγεμονικὸν—*flesh*, *spirit*, and *governing principle*[72]. What he calls the ψυχὴ, or *soul*, containing the brutal part of our nature, is indeed represented as a compound dissoluble, and actually dissolved by death; but the νοῦς, or τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν[73]—the *mind*, or *ruling principle*—he held to be of a pure celestial nature, θεοῦ ἀπόσπασμα, a *particle of God*, which he sends back entire to the stars and the Divinity. Besides, among all his magnificent

[70] Seneca and Marcus Aurelius are the only authorities referred to by Crito in support of his view of the Stoical doctrine of the relation of morality to religion—inadequate in the light of recent research. Cf. even *Siris*, sect. 153, 172, 185, 276, 302, 323, &c. See Zeller's *Philosophie der Griechen*, vol. III. Most Stoics seem to have taught a pantheistic necessarianism, alien to the belief in the immortality of the individual, though not absolutely inconsistent with it.

[71] [Marc. Antonin. lib. III. cap. 16.]—AUTHOR.

[72] Compare this with St. Paul, 1 Thessal. v. 23, who adopts a similar division.

[73] Cf. *Siris*, sect. 160, 172, 326.

lessons and splendid sentiments upon the force and beauty of virtue, he is positive as to the being of God; and that not merely as a plastic nature, or soul of the world, but in the strict sense of a Providence inspecting and taking care of human affairs[74].

The Stoics, therefore, though their style was high, and often above truth and nature, yet it cannot be said that they so resolved every motive to a virtuous life into the sole beauty of virtue as to endeavour to destroy the belief of the immortality of the soul and a distributive Providence. After all, allowing the disinterested Stoics (therein not unlike our modern Quietists) to have made virtue its own sole reward, in the most rigid and absolute sense, yet what is this to those who are no Stoics? If we adopt the whole principles of that sect, admitting their notions of good and evil, their celebrated apathy, and, in one word, setting up for complete Stoics, we may possibly maintain this doctrine with a better grace; at least it will be of a piece, and consistent with the whole. But he who shall borrow this splendid patch from the Stoics, and hope to make a figure by inserting it into a piece of modern composition, seasoned with the wit and notions of these times, will indeed make a figure, but perhaps it may not be in the eyes of a wise man the figure he intended[75].

[74] [Marc. Antonin. lib. II. cap. 11.]—AUTHOR.

[75] Cf. Dial. VII. sect. 13, and *Guardian*, No. 27, 55, 83. In his *Characteristics*, Shaftesbury is fond of taking exception to the doctrine of rewards and punishments in a future life, as adverse to the absolute sufficiency of virtue as an end in itself, and to the common, human motives to goodness:—'In this religious sort of discipline, the principle of *self-love*, which is naturally so prevailing in us, being no way moderated or restrained, but rather improved and made stronger every day, by the exercise of the passions in a subject of more extended self-interest; there may be reason to apprehend lest the temper of this kind should extend itself in general through all the parts of life. For, if the habit be such as to occasion in every particular a stricter attention to self-good and private interest, it must insensibly diminish the affections towards public good, or the interest of society, and introduce a certain narrowness of spirit which, as some pretend, is peculiarly observable in the devout persons and zealots of almost every religious persuasion. This, too, must be confessed—that, if it be true piety to love God *for His own sake*, the over-solicitous regard to private good expected from Him, must of necessity prove a diminution of piety.' (*Characteristics*, vol. II. 58, 59.) 'To be bribed only or terrified into an honest practice bespeaks little of real honesty or worth. . . . . If virtue be not really estimable in itself, I can see nothing estimable in following it for the sake of a bargain.' (vol. I. p. 97.) . . . 'The *saving of souls* is now the heroic passion of exalted wits.' (vol. I. p. 19.) Cf. *Characteristics*, vol. II. pp. 54—57, 68, 69, 270—273, &c.—These passages justly condemn the servile religion which is neither moral nor religious. But if, with the most enlightened philosophers and theologians, we mean by the desire of 'heaven' the desire of perpetual and absolute goodness, for its own sake; and by 'salvation,' a life in conformity to universal law, under a Divine moral government, then religious trust in a future life, so far from being derogatory to a pure and generous morality, is itself an evidence of it. The *Characteristics* may be regarded as an attack upon the abuse of this truth.

15. Though it must be owned the present age is very indulgent to everything that aims at profane raillery; which is alone sufficient to recommend any fantastical composition to the public. You may behold the tinsel of a modern author pass upon this knowing and learned age for good writing; affected strains for wit; pedantry for politeness; obscurity for depths; ramblings for flights; the most awkward imitation for original humour; and all this upon the sole merit of a little artful profaneness.

Alc. Every one is not alike pleased with writings of humour, nor alike capable of them. It is the fine irony of a man of quality[76], 'that certain reverend authors, who can condescend to lay-wit, are nicely qualified to hit the air of breeding and gentility, and that they will in time, no doubt, refine their manner to the edification of the polite world; who have been so seduced by the way of raillery and wit.' The truth is, the various taste of readers requireth various kinds of writers. Our sect hath provided for this with great judgment. To proselyte the graver sort, we have certain profound men at reason and argument. For the coffee-houses and populace, we have declaimers of a copious vein. Of such a writer it is no reproach to say, *fluit lutulentus*; he is the fitter for his readers. Then, for men of rank and politeness, we have the finest and wittiest *railleurs* in the world, whose ridicule is the surest test of truth[77].

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, are those ingenious *railleurs* men of knowledge?

Alc. Very knowing.

Euph. Do they know, for instance, the Copernican system, or the circulation of the blood?

Alc. One would think you judged of our sect by your country neighbours: there is nobody in town but knows all those points.

Euph. You believe then antipodes, mountains in the moon, and the motion of the earth?

Alc. We do.

Euph. Suppose, five or six centuries ago, a man had maintained these notions among the *beaux esprits* of an English court; how do you think they would have been received?

[76] See Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, vol. III. p. 291.

[77] See Shaftesbury's *Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour*. Cf. Leland's *View*, Letter V., and Warburton's *Divine Legation* —Dedication.

Alc. With great ridicule.

Euph. And now it would be ridiculous to ridicule them?

Alc. It would.

Euph. But truth was the same then and now?

Alc. It was.

Euph. It should seem, therefore, that ridicule is no such sovereign touchstone and test of truth as you gentlemen imagine.

Alc. One thing we know: our raillery and sarcasms gall the black tribe, and that is our comfort.

Cri. There is another thing it may be worth your while to know: that men in a laughing fit may applaud a ridicule which shall appear contemptible when they come to themselves. Witness the ridicule of Socrates by the comic poet, the humour and reception it met with no more proving that than the same will yours to be just, when calmly considered by men of sense.

Alc. After all, thus much is certain, our ingenious men make converts by deriding the principles of religion. And, take my word, it is the most successful and pleasing method of conviction. These authors laugh men out of their religion, as Horace did out of their vices: *Admissi circum praecordia ludant.* But a bigot cannot relish or find out their wit.

16. *Cri.* Wit without wisdom, if there be such a thing, is hardly worth finding. And as for the wisdom of these men, it is of a kind so peculiar one may well suspect it. Cicero was a man of sense, and no bigot; nevertheless, he makes Scipio own himself much more vigilant and vigorous in the race of virtue, from supposing heaven the prize[78]. And he introduceth Cato declaring he would never have undergone those virtuous toils for the service of the public, if he had thought his being was to end with this life[79].

Alc. I acknowledge Cato, Scipio, and Cicero were very well for their times; but you must pardon me if I do not think they arrived at the high, consummate virtue of our modern free-thinkers.

Euph. It should seem then that virtue flourisheth more than ever among us?

Alc. It should.

Euph. And this abundant virtue is owing to the method taken by your profound writers to recommend it.

[78] [*Somn. Scipionis.*]—AUTHOR.

[79] [*De Senectute.*]—AUTHOR.

Alc. This I grant.

Euph. But you have acknowledged that the enthusiastic lovers of virtue are not the many of your sect, but only a few select spirits.

To which Alciphron making no answer, Crito addressed himself to Euphranor:—To make, said he, a true estimate of the worth and growth of modern virtue, you are not to count the virtuous men, but rather to consider the quality of their virtue. Now, you must know the virtue of these refined theorists is something so pure and genuine that a very little goes far, and is in truth invaluable. To which that reasonable interested virtue of the old English or Spartan kind can bear no proportion.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, are there not diseases of the soul as well as of the body?

Alc. Without doubt.

Euph. And are not those diseases vicious habits?

Alc. They are.

Euph. And, as bodily distempers are cured by physic, those of the mind are cured by philosophy: are they not?

Alc. I acknowledge it.

Euph. It seems, therefore, that philosophy is a medicine for the soul of man.

Alc. It is.

Euph. How shall we be able to judge of medicines, or know which to prefer? Is it not from the effects wrought by them?

Alc. Doubtless.

Euph. Where an epidemical distemper rages, suppose a new physician should condemn the known established practice, and recommend another method of cure, would you not, in proportion as the bills of mortality increased, be tempted to suspect this new method, notwithstanding all the plausible discourse of its abettors?

Alc. This serves only to amuse and lead us from the question.

Cri. It puts me in mind of my friend Lamprocles, who needed but one argument against infidels. I observed, said he, that as infidelity grew, there grew corruption of every kind, and new vices. This simple observation on matter of fact was sufficient to make him, notwithstanding the remonstrance of several ingenious men, imbue and season the minds of his children betimes with the principles of religion. The new theories, which our acute moderns

have endeavoured to substitute in place of religion, have had their full course in the present age, and produced their effect on the minds and manners of men. That men are men, is a sure maxim: but it is as sure that Englishmen are not the same men they were; whether better or worse, more or less virtuous, I need not say. Every one may see and judge. Though, indeed, after Aristides had been banished, and Socrates put to death at Athens, a man, without being a conjuror, might guess what the Beauty of Virtue could do in England. But there is now neither room nor occasion for guessing. We have our own experience to open our eyes; which yet, if we continue to keep shut till the remains of religious education are quite worn off from the minds of men, it is to be feared we shall then open them wide, not to avoid, but to behold and lament our ruin.

Alc. Be the consequences what they will, I can never bring myself to be of a mind with those who measure truth by convenience. Truth is the only divinity that I adore. Wherever truth leads, I shall follow.

Euph. You have then a passion for truth?

Alc. Undoubtedly.

Euph. For all truths?

Alc. For all.

Euph. To know, or to publish them?

Alc. Both.

Euph. What! would you undeceive a child that was taking physic? Would you officiously set an enemy right that was making a wrong attack? Would you help an enraged man to his sword?

Alc. In such cases, common sense directs one how to behave.

Euph. Common sense, it seems then, must be consulted whether a truth be salutary or hurtful, fit to be declared or concealed.

Alc. How? you would have me conceal and stifle the truth, and keep it to myself. Is this what you aim at?

Euph. I only make a plain inference from what you grant. As for myself, I do not believe your opinions true. And, although you do, you should not therefore, if you would appear consistent with yourself, think it necessary or wise to publish hurtful truths. What service can it do mankind to lessen the motives to virtue, or what damage to increase them?

Alc. None in the world. But, I must needs say I cannot reconcile the received notions of a God and Providence to my understanding, and my nature abhors the baseness of conniving at a falsehood.

Euph. Shall we therefore appeal to truth, and examine the reasons by which you are withheld from believing these points?

Alc. With all my heart; but enough for the present. We will make this the subject of our next conference.

THE FOURTH DIALOGUE[80].

1. Prejudices concerning a Deity. 2. Rules laid down by Alciphron to be observed in proving a God. 3. What sort of proof he expects. 4. Whence we collect the being of other thinking individuals. 5. The same method *a fortiori* proves the being of God. 6. Alciphron's second thoughts on this point. 7. God speaks to men. 8. How distance is perceived by sight. 9. The proper objects of sight at no distance. 10. Lights, shades, and colours, variously combined, form a language. 11. The signification of this language learned by experience. 12. God explaineth Himself to the eyes of men by the arbitrary use of sensible signs. 13. The prejudice and twofold aspect of a minute philosoper. 14. God present to mankind, informs, admonishes, and directs them in a sensible manner. 15. Admirable nature and use of this Visual Language. 16. Minute philosophers content to admit a God in certain senses. 17. Opinion of some who hold, that knowledge and wisdom are not properly in God. 18. Dangerous tendency of this notion. 19. Its original. 20. The sense of schoolmen upon it. 21. Scholastic use of the terms 'analogy' and 'analogical' explained: analogical perfections of God misunderstood. 22. God intelligent, wise, and good, in the proper sense of the words. 23. Objection from moral evil considered. 24. Men argue from their own defects against a Deity. 25. Religious worship reasonable and expedient.

1. EARLY the next morning, as I looked out of my window, I saw Alciphron walking in the garden with all the signs of a man in deep thought. Upon which I went down to him.

Alciphron, said I, this early and profound meditation puts me in no small fright.—How so? Because I should be sorry to be convinced there was no God. The thought of anarchy in

[80] In this Dialogue, the transition is made from Ethics to Religion, which is regarded as the motive force in morals. We have here Berkeley's vindication of Religion; on the foundation of his own metaphysical philosophy, which substitutes supreme Mind for the inscrutable substances and causes of Materialism—thus discerning in the universal prevalence of Natural Law throughout the sensible world the perpetual Providence of God, and in physical Science a portion of Divine Revelation.

In sect. 8—15, Euphranor and Crito rest faith in the existence of God on the fact of Visual Language, or Sense-symbolism; which is the ground of belief in the existence of our fellow-men when we hear them speak. The *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision*, and particularly the *Vindication and Explanation* of that Theory, published the year after the appearance of *Alciphron*, should be compared with these sections. Those which follow (sect. 16—24) relate to the sort of knowledge we have of Divine Being, thus revealed in the Language of Nature—the meaning, in short, in which the word *God* is to be taken when we say that He exists, and is wise, powerful, intelligent, and good. The Fourth Dialogue is thus a refutation of speculative and practical Atheism, and a blending of religion with modern Science, as the preceding one blends practical morality and religion with ancient Art and the idea of beauty.

nature is to me more shocking than in civil life: inasmuch as natural concerns are more important than civil, and the basis of all others.

I grant, replied Alciphron, that some inconvenience may possibly follow from disproving a God: but as to what you say of fright and shocking, all that is nothing but mere prejudice. Men frame an idea or chimera in their own minds, and then fall down and worship it. Notions govern mankind: but of all notions that of God's governing the world hath taken the deepest root and spread the farthest: it is therefore in philosophy an heroical achievement to dispossess this imaginary monarch of his government, and banish all those fears and spectres which the light of reason alone can dispel:

> Non radii solis, non lucida tela diei
> Discutiunt, sed naturae species ratioque[81].

My part, said I, shall be to stand by, as I have hitherto done, and take notes of all that passeth during this memorable event; while a minute philosopher, not six feet high, attempts to dethrone the monarch of the universe.

Alas! replied Alciphron, arguments are not to be measured by feet and inches. One man may see more than a million; and a short argument, managed by a free-thinker, may be sufficient to overthrow the most gigantic chimera.

As we were engaged in this discourse, Crito and Euphranor joined us.

I find you have been beforehand with us to-day, said Crito to Alciphron, and taken the advantage of solitude and early hours, while Euphranor and I were asleep in our beds. We may, therefore, expect to see atheism placed in the best light, and supported by the strongest arguments.

2. *Alc.* The being of a God is a subject upon which there has been a world of commonplace, which it is needless to repeat. Give me leave therefore to lay down certain rules and limitations, in order to shorten our present conference. For, as the end of debating is to persuade, all those things which are foreign to this end should be left out of our debate.

[81] [Lucretius.]—AUTHOR.

First then, let me tell you I am not to be persuaded by metaphysical arguments; such, for instance, as are drawn from the idea of an all-perfect being, or the absurdity of an infinite progression of causes[82]. This sort of arguments I have always found dry and jejune; and, as they are not suited to my way of thinking, they may perhaps puzzle, but never will convince me. Secondly, I am not to be persuaded by the authority either of past or present ages, of mankind in general, or of particular wise men, all which passeth for little or nothing with a man of sound argument and free thought. Thirdly, all proofs drawn from utility or convenience are foreign to the purpose. They may prove indeed the usefulness of the notion, but not the existence of the thing. Whatever legislators or statesmen may think, truth and convenience are very different things to the rigorous eye of a philosopher.

And now, that I may not seem partial, I will limit myself also not to object, in the first place, from anything that may seem irregular or unaccountable in the works of nature, against a cause of infinite power and wisdom; because I already know the answer you will make, to wit, that no one can judge of the symmetry and use of the parts of an infinite machine, which are all relative to each other, and to the whole, without being able to comprehend the entire machine, or the whole universe. And, in the second place, I shall engage myself not to object against the justice and providence of a supreme Being from the evil that befals good men, and the prosperity which is often the portion of wicked men in this life; because I know that, instead of admitting this to be an objection against a Deity, you would make it an argument for a future state, in which there shall be such a retribution of rewards and punishments as may vindicate the Divine attributes, and set all things right in the end. Now, these answers, though they should be admitted for good ones, are in truth no proofs of the being of God, but only solutions of certain difficulties which might be objected, supposing it already proved by proper arguments. Thus much I thought fit to premise, in order to save time and trouble both to you and myself.

Cri. I think that as the proper end of our conference ought to be supposed the discovery and defence of truth, so truth may be

[82] As in the *Meditations* of Des Cartes, or in Clarke's *Demonstration*.

justified, not only by persuading its adversaries, but, where that cannot be done, by shewing them to be unreasonable. Arguments, therefore, which carry light have their effect, even against an opponent who shuts his eyes, because they shew him to be obstinate and prejudiced. Besides, this distinction between arguments that puzzle and that convince, is least of all observed by minute philosophers, and need not therefore be observed by others in their favour.—But, perhaps, Euphranor may be willing to encounter you on your own terms, in which case I have nothing further to say.

3. *Euph.* Alciphron acts like a skilful general, who is bent upon gaining the advantage of the ground, and alluring the enemy out of their trenches. We who believe a God are entrenched within tradition, custom, authority, and law. And, nevertheless, instead of attempting to force us, he proposes that he should voluntarily abandon these intrenchments, and make the attack; when we may act on the defensive with much security and ease, leaving him the trouble to dispossess us of what we need not resign. Those reasons (continued he, addressing himself to Alciphron) which you have mustered up in this morning's meditation, if they do not weaken, must establish our belief of a God; for the utmost is to be expected from so great a master in his profession, when he sets his strength to a point.

Alc. I hold the confused notion of a Deity, or some invisible power, to be of all prejudices the most unconquerable. When half-a-dozen ingenious men are got together over a glass of wine, by a cheerful fire, in a room well lighted, we banish with ease all the spectres of fancy and education, and are very clear in our decisions. But, as I was taking a solitary walk before it was broad daylight in yonder grove, methought the point was not quite so clear; nor could I readily recollect the force of those arguments which used to appear so conclusive at other times. I had I know not what awe upon my mind, and seemed haunted by a sort of panic, which I cannot otherwise account for than by supposing it the effect of prejudice: for, you must know that I, like the rest of the world, was once upon a time catechised and tutored into the belief of a God or Spirit. There is no surer mark of prejudice than the believing a thing without reason. What necessity then can there

be that I should set myself the difficult task of proving a negative, when it is sufficient to observe that there is no proof of the affirmative, and that the admitting it without proof is unreasonable? Prove therefore your opinion; or, if you cannot, you may indeed remain in possession of it, but you will only be possessed of a prejudice.

Euph. O Alciphron, to content you we must prove, it seems, and we must prove upon your own terms. But, in the first place, let us see what sort of proof you expect.

Alc. Perhaps I may not expect it, but I will tell you what sort of proof I would have: and that is, in short—such proof as every man of sense requires of a matter of fact, or the existence of any other particular thing. For instance, should a man ask why I believe there is a king of Great Britain? I might answer—Because I had seen him. Or a king of Spain? Because I had seen those who saw him. But as for this King of kings, I neither saw Him myself, or any one else that ever did see Him. Surely, if there be such a thing as God, it is very strange that He should leave Himself without a witness; that men should still dispute His being; and that there should be no one evident, sensible, plain proof of it, without recourse to philosophy or metaphysics. A matter of fact is not to be proved by notions, but by facts. This is clear and full to the point. You see what I would be at. Upon these principles I defy superstition.

Euph. You believe then as far as you can see?

Alc. That is my rule of faith.

Euph. How! will you not believe the existence of things which you hear, unless you also see them?

Alc. I will not say so neither. When I insisted on *seeing*, I would be understood to mean perceiving in general. Outward objects make very different impressions upon the animal spirits, all which are comprised under the common name of *sense*. And whatever we can perceive by any sense we may be sure of.

4. *Euph.* What! do you believe then that there are such things as animal spirits?

Alc. Doubtless.

Euph. By what sense do you perceive them?

Alc. I do not perceive them immediately by any of my senses. I am nevertheless persuaded of their existence, because I can collect it from their effects and operations. They are the messengers which, running to and fro in the nerves, preserve a communication between the soul and outward objects.

Euph. You admit then the being of a soul?

Alc. Provided I do not admit an immaterial substance, I see no inconvenience in admitting there may be such a thing as a soul. And this may be no more than a thin fine texture of subtile parts or spirits residing in the brain.

Euph. I do not ask about its nature. I only ask whether you admit that there is a principle of thought and action, and whether it be perceivable by sense.

Alc. I grant that there is such a principle, and that it is not the object of sense itself, but inferred from appearances which are perceived by sense.

Euph. If I understand you rightly, from animal functions and motions you infer the existence of animal spirits, and from reasonable acts you infer the existence of a reasonable soul. Is it not so?

Alc. It is.

Euph. It should seem, therefore, that the being of things imperceptible to sense may be collected from effects and signs, or sensible tokens.

Alc. It may.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, is not the soul that which makes the principal distinction between a real person and a shadow, a living man and a carcass?

Alc. I grant it is.

Euph. I cannot, therefore, know that *you*, for instance, are a distinct thinking individual, or a living real man, by surer or other signs than those from which it can be inferred that you have a soul?

Alc. You cannot.

Euph. Pray tell me, are not all acts immediately and properly perceived by sense reducible to motion[83]?

Alc. They are.

Euph. From motions, therefore, you infer a mover or cause; and

[83] Cf. *De Motu*, passim.

from reasonable motions (or such as appear calculated for a reasonable end) a rational cause, soul or spirit?

Alc. Even so.

5. *Euph.* The soul of man actuates but a small body, an insignificant particle, in respect of the great masses of nature, the elements, and heavenly bodies, and system of the world. And the wisdom that appears in those motions which are the effect of human reason is incomparably less than that which discovers itself in the structure and use of organized natural bodies, animal or vegetable. A man with his hand can make no machine so admirable as the hand itself; nor can any of those motions by which we trace out human reason approach the skill and contrivance of those wonderful motions of the heart, and brain, and other vital parts, which do not depend on the will of man.

Alc. All this is true.

Euph. Doth it not follow, then, that from natural motions, independent of man's will, may be inferred both power and wisdom incomparably greater than that of the human soul?

Alc. It should seem so.

Euph. Further, is there not in natural productions and effects a visible unity of counsel and design? Are not the rules fixed and immoveable? Do not the same laws of motion obtain throughout? The same in China and here, the same two thousand years ago and at this day?

Alc. All this I do not deny.

Euph. Is there not also a connection or relation between animals and vegetables, between both and the elements, between the elements and heavenly bodies; so that, from their mutual respects, influences, subordinations, and uses, they may be collected to be parts of one whole, conspiring to one and the same end, and fulfilling the same design?

Alc. Supposing all this to be true.

Euph. Will it not then follow that this vastly great, or infinite power and wisdom must be supposed in one and the same Agent, Spirit, or Mind; and that we have at least as clear, full, and immediate certainty of the being of this infinitely wise and powerful Spirit, as of any one human soul whatsoever besides our own?

Alc. Let me consider: I suspect we proceed too hastily. What!

Do you pretend you can have the same assurance of the being of a God that you can have of mine, whom you actually see stand before you and talk to you?

Euph. The very same, if not greater[94].

Alc. How do you make this appear?

Euph. By the person Alciphron is meant an individual thinking thing, and not the hair, skin, or visible surface, or any part of the outward form, colour, or shape, of Alciphron.

Alc. This I grant.

Euph. And, in granting this, you grant that, in a strict sense, I do not see Alciphron, i. e. that individual thinking thing, but only such visible signs and tokens as suggest and infer the being of that invisible thinking principle or soul. Even so, in the self-same manner, it seems to me that, though I cannot with eyes of flesh behold the invisible God, yet I do in the strictest sense behold and perceive by all my senses such signs and tokens, such effects and operations, as suggest, indicate, and demonstrate an invisible God—as certainly, and with the same evidence, at least, as any other signs, perceived by sense, do suggest to me the existence of your soul, spirit, or thinking principle; which I am convinced of only by a few signs or effects, and the motions of one small organized body: whereas I do at all times and in all places perceive sensible signs which evince the being of God. The point, therefore, doubted or denied by you at the beginning, now seems manifestly to follow from the premises. Throughout this whole inquiry, have we not considered every step with care, and made not the least advance without clear evidence? You and I examined and assented singly to each foregoing proposition: what shall we do then with the conclusion? For my part, if you do not help me out, I find myself under an absolute necessity of admitting it for true. You must therefore be content hence-forward to bear the blame, if I live and die in the belief of a God.

6. ***Alc.*** It must be confessed, I do not readily find an answer. There seems to be some foundation for what you say. But, on the other hand, if the point was so clear as you pretend, I cannot conceive how so many sagacious men of our sect should be so much in the dark as not to know or believe one syllable of it.

[94] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 147.

Euph. O Alciphron, it is not our present business to account for the oversights, or vindicate the honour, of those great men the free-thinkers, when their very existence is in danger of being called in question.

Alc. How so?

Euph. Be pleased to recollect the concessions you have made, and then shew me, if the arguments for a Deity be not conclusive, by what better arguments you can prove the existence of that thinking thing which in strictness constitutes the free-thinker.

As soon as Euphranor had uttered these words, Alciphron stopped short, and stood in a posture of meditation, while the rest of us continued our walk and took two or three turns, after which he joined us again with a smiling countenance, like one who had made some discovery. I have found, said he, what may clear up the point in dispute, and give Euphranor entire satisfaction; I would say an argument which will prove the existence of a free-thinker, the like whereof cannot be applied to prove the existence of God. You must know then that your notion of our perceiving the existence of God, as certainly and immediately as we do that of a human person, I could by no means digest, though I must own it puzzled me, till I had considered the matter. At first methought a particular structure, shape, or motion was a most certain proof of a thinking reasonable soul. But a little attention satisfied me that these things have no necessary connection with reason, knowledge, and wisdom; and that, allowing them to be certain proofs of a living soul, they cannot be so of a thinking and reasonable one. Upon second thoughts, therefore, and a minute examination of this point, I have found that nothing so much convinces me of the existence of another person as *his speaking to me.* It is my hearing you talk that, in strict and philosophical truth, is to me the best argument for your being. And this is a peculiar argument, inapplicable to your purpose; for, you will not, I suppose, pretend that God speaks to man in the same clear and sensible manner as one man doth to another?

7. *Euph.* How! is then the impression of sound so much more evident than that of other senses? Or, if it be, is the voice of man louder than that of thunder?

Alc. Alas! you mistake the point. What I mean is not the

sound of speech merely as such, but the arbitrary use of sensible signs, which have no similitude or necessary[85] connection with the things signified; so as by the apposite management of them to suggest and exhibit to my mind an endless variety of things, differing in nature, time, and place; thereby informing me, entertaining me, and directing me how to act, not only with regard to things near and present, but also with regard to things distant and future. No matter whether these signs are pronounced or written; whether they enter by the eye or ear: they have the same use, and are equally proofs of an intelligent, thinking, designing cause.

Euph. But what if it should appear that God really speaks to man; would this content you?

Alc. I am for admitting no inward speech, no holy instincts, or suggestions of light or spirit. All that, you must know, passeth with men of sense for nothing. If you do not make it plain to me that God speaks to men by outward sensible signs, of such sort and in such manner as I have defined, you do nothing.

Euph. But if it shall appear plainly that God speaks to men by the intervention and use of arbitrary, outward, sensible signs, having no resemblance or necessary connection with the things they stand for and suggest: if it shall appear that, by innumerable combinations of these signs, an endless variety of things is discovered and made known to us; and that we are thereby instructed or informed in their different natures; that we are taught and admonished what to shun, and what to pursue; and are directed how to regulate our motions, and how to act with respect to things distant from us, as well in time as place, will this content you?

Alc. It is the very thing I would have you make out; for therein consists the force, and use, and nature of language.

8. *Euph.* Look, Alciphron, do you not see the castle upon yonder hill?

Alc. I do.

Euph. Is it not at a great distance from you?

[85] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 17, 23, 28, 51, 58—66, 147; *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 30, 31, 65, 66, &c.; *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, sect. 30, 39, 40, 42—45, &c.; *Siris*, sect. 252—255, &c.—in all which the *arbitrariness* (relatively to us) of the actual relations of co-existence and succession among the phenomena of nature is urged, and the analogy between these relations, and those of spoken and written signs to their meanings, in an artificial language, is illustrated. An *a priori* philosophy of the changes in nature, accordingly, transcends human intelligence.

Alc. It is.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, is not distance a line turned endwise to the eye[86]?

Alc. Doubtless.

Euph. And can a line, in that situation, project more than one single point on the bottom of the eye?

Alc. It cannot.

Euph. Therefore the appearance of a long and of a short distance is of the same magnitude, or rather of no magnitude at all—being in all cases one single point.

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. Should it not follow from hence that distance is not immediately perceived by the eye?

Alc. It should.

Euph. Must it not then be perceived by the mediation of some other thing?

Alc. It must.

Euph. To discover what this is, let us examine what alteration there may be in the appearance of the same object, placed at different distances from the eye. Now, I find by experience that when an object is removed still farther and farther off in a direct line from the eye, its visible appearance still grows lesser and fainter; and this change of appearance, being proportional and universal, seems to me to be that by which we apprehend the various degrees of distance.

Alc. I have nothing to object to this.

Euph. But littleness or faintness, in their own nature, seem to have no necessary connection with greater length of distance?

Alc. I admit this to be true.

Euph. Will it not follow then that they could never suggest it but from experience?

Alc. It will.

Euph. That is to say—we perceive distance, not immediately, but by mediation of a sign, which hath no likeness to it, or necessary connection with it, but only suggests it from repeated experience, as words do things.

[86] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 2—51, with this and with what follows, regarding Distance. This and the four following sections contain a popular exposition of the New Theory of Vision.

Alc. Hold, Euphranor: now I think of it, the writers in optics tell us of an angle made by the two optic axes, where they meet in the visible point or object; which angle, the obtuser it is the nearer it shews the object to be, and by how much the acuter, by so much the farther off; and this from a necessary demonstrable connection.

Euph. The mind then finds out the distance of things by geometry?

Alc. It doth.

Euph. Should it not follow, therefore, that nobody could see but those who had learned geometry, and knew something of lines and angles?

Alc. There is a sort of natural geometry which is got without learning.

Euph. Pray inform me, Alciphron, in order to frame a proof of any kind, or deduce one point from another, is it not necessary that I perceive the connection of the terms in the premises, and the connection of the premises with the conclusion; and, in general, to know one thing by means of another, must I not first know that other thing? When I perceive your meaning by your words, must I not first perceive the words themselves? and must I not know the premises before I infer the conclusion?

Alc. All this is true.

Euph. Whoever, therefore, collects a nearer distance from a wider angle, or a farther distance from an acuter angle, must first perceive the angles themselves. And he who doth not perceive those angles can infer nothing from them. Is it so or not?

Alc. It is as you say.

Euph. Ask now the first man you meet whether he perceives or knows anything of those optic angles? or whether he ever thinks about them, or makes any inferences from them, either by natural or artificial geometry? What answer do you think he would make?

Alc. To speak the truth, I believe his answer would be, that he knew nothing of these matters.

Euph. It cannot therefore be that men judge of distance by angles: nor, consequently, can there be any force in the argument you drew from thence, to prove that distance is perceived by means of something which hath a necessary connection with it.

Alc. I agree with you.

9. *Euph.* To me it seems that a man may know whether he perceives a thing or no; and, if he perceives it, whether it be immediately or mediately: and, if mediately, whether by means of something like or unlike, necessarily or arbitrarily connected with it.

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. And is it not certain that distance is perceived only by experience, if it be neither perceived immediately by itself, nor by means of any image, nor of any lines and angles which are like it, or have a necessary connection with it?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Doth it not seem to follow, from what hath been said and allowed by you, that before all experience a man would not imagine the things he saw were at any distance from him?

Alc. How! let me see.

Euph. The littleness or faintness of appearance, or any other idea or sensation not necessarily connected with or resembling distance, can no more suggest different degrees of distance, or any distance at all, to the mind which hath not experienced a connection of the things signifying and signified, than words can suggest notions before a man hath learned the language.

Alc. I allow this to be true.

Euph. Will it not thence follow that a man born blind, and made to see, would, upon first receiving his sight, take the things he saw not to be at any distance from him, but in his eye, or rather in his mind [87]?

Alc. I must own it seems so. And yet, on the other hand, I can hardly persuade myself that, if I were in such a state, I should think those objects which I now see at so great distance to be at no distance at all.

Euph. It seems, then, that you now think the objects of sight are at a distance from you?

Alc. Doubtless I do. Can any one question but yonder castle is at a great distance?

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, can you discern the doors, windows, and battlements of that same castle?

Alc. I cannot. At this distance it seems only a small round tower.

[87] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 41; *Vindication*, sect. 71.

Euph. But I, who have been at it, know that it is no small round tower, but a large square building with battlements and turrets, which it seems you do not see.

Alc. What will you infer from thence?

Euph. I would infer that the very object which you strictly and properly perceive by sight is not that thing which is several miles distant.

Alc. Why so?

Euph. Because a little round object is one thing, and a great square object is another. Is it not?

Alc. I cannot deny it.

Euph. Tell me, is not the visible appearance alone the proper object of sight?

Alc. It is.

What think you now (said Euphranor, pointing towards the heavens) of the visible appearance of yonder planet? Is it not a round luminous flat, no bigger than a sixpence?

Alc. What then?

Euph. Tell me then, what you think of the planet itself. Do you not conceive it to be a vast opaque globe, with several unequal risings and valleys?

Alc. I do.

Euph. How can you therefore conclude that the proper object of your sight exists at a distance?

Alc. I confess I know not.

Euph. For your further conviction, do but consider that crimson cloud. Think you that, if you were in the very place where it is, you would perceive anything like what you now see?

Alc. By no means. I should perceive only a dark mist.

Euph. Is it not plain, therefore, that neither the castle, the planet, nor the cloud, which you see here, are those real ones which you suppose exist at a distance?

10. ***Alc.*** What am I to think then? Do we see anything at all, or is it altogether fancy and illusion?

Euph. Upon the whole, it seems the proper objects of sight are light and colours[88], with their several shades and degrees; all which,

[88] *Cf. New Theory of Vision*, sect. 43.

being infinitely diversified and combined, do form a language wonderfully adapted to suggest and exhibit to us the distances, figures, situations, dimensions, and various qualities of tangible objects — not by similitude, nor yet by inference of necessary connection, but by the arbitrary imposition of Providence, just as words suggest the things signified by them.

Alc. How! Do we not, strictly speaking, perceive by sight such things as trees, houses, men, rivers, and the like?

Euph. We do, indeed, perceive or apprehend those things by the faculty of sight. But, will it follow from thence that they are the proper and immediate objects of sight, any more than that all those things are the proper and immediate objects of hearing which are signified by the help of words or sounds?

Alc. You would have us think, then, that light, shades, and colours, variously combined, answer to the several articulations of sound in language; and that, by means thereof, all sorts of objects are suggested to the mind through the eye, in the same manner as they are suggested by words or sounds through the ear: that is, neither from necessary deduction to the judgment, nor from similitude to the fancy, but purely and solely from experience, custom, and habit.

Euph. I would not have you think anything more than the nature of things obligeth you to think, nor submit in the least to my judgment, but only to the force of truth: which is an imposition that I suppose the freest thinkers will not pretend to be exempt from.

Alc. You have led me, it seems, step by step, till I am got I know not where. But I shall try to get out again, if not by the way I came, yet by some other of my own finding.

Here Alciphron, having made a short pause, proceeded as follows—

11. Answer me, Euphranor, should it not follow from these principles that a man born blind, and made to see, would, at first sight, not only not perceive their distance, but also not so much as know the very things themselves which he saw, for instance, men or trees? which surely to suppose must be absurd.

Euph. I grant, in consequence of those principles, which both you and I have admitted, that such a one would never think of

men, trees, or any other objects that he had been accustomed to perceive by touch, upon having his mind filled with new sensations of light and colours, whose various combinations he doth not yet understand, or know the meaning of; no more than a Chinese, upon first hearing the words *man* and *tree* would think of the things signified by them. In both cases, there must be time and experience, by repeated acts, to acquire a habit of knowing the connection between the signs and things signified; that is to say, of understanding the language, whether of the eyes or of the ears. And I conceive no absurdity in all this.

Alc. I see, therefore, in strict philosophical truth, that rock only in the same sense that I may be said to hear it, when the word *rock* is pronounced.

Euph. In the very same.

Alc. How comes it to pass then that every one shall say he sees, for instance, a rock or a house, when those things are before his eyes; but nobody will say he hears a rock or a house, but only the words or sounds themselves by which those things are said to be signified or suggested but not heard[89]? Besides, if vision be only a language speaking to the eyes, it may be asked, when did men learn this language? To acquire the knowledge of so many signs as go to the making up a language is a work of some difficulty. But, will any man say he hath spent time, or been at pains, to learn this Language of Vision?

Euph. No wonder; we cannot assign a time beyond our remotest memory. If we have been all practising this language, ever since our first entrance into the world: if the Author of Nature constantly speaks to the eyes of all mankind, even in their earliest infancy, whenever the eyes are open in the light, whether alone or in company: it doth not seem to me at all strange that men should not be aware they had ever learned a language begun so early, and practised so constantly, as this of Vision. And, if we also consider that it is the same throughout the whole world, and not, like other languages, differing in different places, it will not seem unaccountable that men should mistake the connection between the proper objects of sight and the things signified by them to be founded in necessary relation or likeness; or, that they should even take them

[89] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 46, 47.

for the same things. Hence it seems easy to conceive why men who do not think should confound in this language of vision the signs with the things signified, otherwise than they are wont to do in the various particular languages formed by the several nations of men[90].

12. It may be also worth while to observe that signs, being little considered in themselves, or for their own sake, but only in their relative capacity, and for the sake of those things whereof they are signs, it comes to pass that the mind overlooks them, so as to carry its attention immediately on to the things signified. Thus, for example, in reading we run over the characters with the slightest regard, and pass on to the meaning. Hence it is frequent for men to say, they see words, and notions, and things in reading of a book; whereas in strictness they see only the characters which suggest words, notions, and things. And, by parity of reason, may we not suppose that men, not resting in, but overlooking the immediate and proper objects of sight, as in their own nature of small moment, carry their attention onward to the very things signified, and talk as if they saw the secondary objects? which, in truth and strictness, are not seen, but only suggested and apprehended by means of the proper objects of sight, which alone are seen.

Alc. To speak my mind freely, this dissertation grows tedious, and runs into points too dry and minute for a gentleman's attention.

I thought, said Crito, we had been told that minute philosophers loved to consider things closely and minutely.

Alc. That is true, but in so polite an age who would be a mere philosopher? There is a certain scholastic accuracy which ill suits the freedom and ease of a well-bred man. But, to cut short this chicane, I propound it fairly to your own conscience, whether you really think that God Himself speaks every day and in every place to the eyes of all men.

Euph. That is really and in truth my opinion; and it should be yours too, if you are consistent with yourself, and abide by your own definition of language. Since you cannot deny that the great Mover and Author of nature constantly explaineth Himself to

[90] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 144.

the eyes of men by the sensible intervention of arbitrary signs, which have no similitude or connection with the things signified; so as, by compounding and disposing them, to suggest and exhibit an endless variety of objects, differing in nature, time, and place; thereby informing and directing men how to act with respect to things distant and future, as well as near and present. In consequence, I say, of your own sentiments and concessions, you have as much reason to think the Universal Agent or God speaks to your eyes, as you can have for thinking any particular person speaks to your ears.

Alc. I cannot help thinking that some fallacy runs throughout this whole ratiocination, though perhaps I may not readily point it out. Hold! let me see. In language the signs are arbitrary, are they not?

Euph. They are.

Alc. And, consequently, they do not always suggest real matters of fact. Whereas this Natural Language, as you call it, or these visible signs, do always suggest things in the same uniform way, and have the same constant regular connection with matters of fact: whence it should seem the connection was neccessary; and, therefore, according to the definition premised, it can be no language. How do you solve this objection?

Euph. You may solve it yourself by the help of a picture or looking-glass[91].

Alc. You are in the right. I see there is nothing in it. I know not what else to say to this opinion, more than that it is so odd and contrary to my way of thinking that I shall never assent to it.

13. *Euph.* Be pleased to recollect your own lectures upon prejudice, and apply them in the present case. Perhaps they may help you to follow where reason leads, and to suspect notions which are strongly rivetted, without having been ever examined.

Alc. I disdain the suspicion of prejudice. And I do not speak only for myself. I know a club of most ingenious men, the freest from prejudice of any men alive, who abhor the notion of a God, and I doubt not would be very able to untie this knot.

[91] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 45. So also Jonathan Edwards, *Remarks in Mental Philosophy*, art. 'Existence,' in Appendix to Memoirs.

Upon which words of Alciphron, I, who had acted the part of an indifferent stander-by, observed to him—That it misbecame his character and repeated professions, to own an attachment to the judgment, or build upon the presumed abilities of other men, how ingenious soever; and that this proceeding might encourage his adversaries to have recourse to authority, in which perhaps they would find their account more than he.

Oh! said Crito, I have often observed the conduct of minute philosophers. When one of them has got a ring of disciples round him, his method is to exclaim against prejudice, and recommend thinking and reasoning, giving to understand that himself is a man of deep researches and close argument, one who examines impartially, and concludes warily. The same man, in other company, if he chance to be pressed with reason, shall laugh at logic, and assume the lazy supine airs of a fine gentleman, a wit, a *railleur*, to avoid the dryness of a regular and exact inquiry. This double face of the minute philosopher is of no small use to propagate and maintain his notions. Though to me it seems a plain case that if a fine gentleman will shake off authority, and appeal from religion to reason, unto reason he must go: and, if he cannot go without leading-strings, surely he had better be led by the authority of the public than by that of any knot of minute philosophers.

Alc. Gentlemen, this discourse is very irksome, and needless. For my part, I am a friend to inquiry. I am willing reason should have its full and free scope. I build on no man's authority. For my part, I have no interest in denying a God. Any man may believe or not believe a God, as he pleases, for me. But, after all, Euphranor must allow me to stare a little at his conclusions.

Euph. The conclusions are yours as much as mine, for you were led to them by your own concessions.

14. You, it seems, stare to find that God is not far from every one of us; and that in him we live, and move, and have our being. You, who, in the beginning of this morning's conference, thought it strange that God should leave Himself without a witness, do now think it strange the witness should be so full and clear.

Alc. I must own I do. I was aware, indeed, of a certain

metaphysical hypothesis of our seeing all things in God by the union of the human soul with the intelligible substance of the Deity[92], which neither I, nor any one else could make sense of. But I never imagined it could be pretended that we saw God with our fleshly eyes as plain as we see any human person whatsoever, and that he daily speaks to our senses in a manifest and clear dialect[93].

Cri. [[94]As for that metaphysical hypothesis, I can make no more of it than you. But I think it plain] this [[95]optic] language hath a necessary connection with knowledge, wisdom, and goodness. It is equivalent to a constant creation, betokening an immediate act of power and providence. It cannot be accounted for by mechanical principles, by atoms, attractions, or effluvia. The instantaneous production and reproduction of so many signs, combined, dissolved, transposed, diversified, and adapted to such an endless variety of purposes, ever shifting with the occasions and suited to them, being utterly inexplicable and unaccountable by the laws of motion, by chance, by fate, or the like blind principles, doth set forth and testify the immediate operation of a spirit or thinking being; and not merely of a spirit, which every motion or gravitation may possibly infer, but of one wise, good, and provident Spirit, which directs and rules and governs the world. Some philosophers, being convinced of the wisdom and power of the Creator, from the make and contrivance of organized bodies and orderly system of the world, did nevertheless imagine that he left this system with all its parts and contents well adjusted and put in motion, as an artist leaves a clock, to go thenceforward of itself for a certain period[96]. But this Visual Language proves, not a Creator merely, but a provident Governor, actually and intimately present, and attentive to all our interests and motions, who watches over our conduct, and takes care of our minutest actions and designs throughout the whole course of our lives, informing, admonishing, and directing

[92] Malebranche's hypothesis of the vision of the sensible world in God, which Berkeley here and elsewhere disclaims.

[93] Cf. sect. 5, and *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 147.

[94] Introduced in second edition.

[95] Introduced in second edition.

[96] Cf. *Siris*, sect. 233; see also *Papers* (1715—1716) between Clarke and Leibnitz, pp. 3, 5, &c., and the *Système Nouveau de la Nature* of Leibnitz. Speculations of this sort, regarding Nature, Creation, and Providence, were current in England in the early part of last century, when metaphysical discussion was stimulated by Locke, Malebranche, Newton, Clarke, and Leibnitz.

incessantly, in a most evident and sensible manner. This is truly wonderful.

Euph. And is it not so, that men should be encompassed by such a wonder, without reflecting on it?

15. Something there is of Divine and admirable in this Language, addressed to our eyes, that may well awaken the mind, and deserve its utmost attention:—it is learned with so little pains: it expresseth the differences of things so clearly and aptly: it instructs with such facility and despatch, by one glance of the eye conveying a greater variety of advices, and a more distinct knowledge of things, than could be got by a discourse of several hours. And, while it informs, it amuses and entertains the mind with such singular pleasure and delight. It is of such excellent use in giving a stability and permanency to human discourse, in recording sounds and bestowing life on dead languages, enabling us to converse with men of remote ages and countries. And it answers so apposite to the uses and necessities of mankind, informing us more distinctly of those objects whose nearness and magnitude qualify them to be of greatest detriment or benefit to our bodies, and less exactly in proportion as their littleness or distance makes them of less concern to us.

Alc. And yet these strange things affect men but little.

Euph. But they are not strange, they are familiar; and that makes them be overlooked. Things which rarely happen strike; whereas frequency lessens the admiration of things, though in themselves ever so admirable. Hence, a common man, who is not used to think and make reflections, would probably be more convinced of the being of a God by one single sentence heard once in his life from the sky than by all the experience he has had of this Visual Language, contrived with such exquisite skill, so constantly addressed to his eyes, and so plainly declaring the nearness, wisdom, and providence of Him with whom we have to do.

Alc. After all, I cannot satisfy myself how men should be so little surprised or amazed about this visive faculty, if it was really of a nature so surprising and amazing.

Euph. But let us suppose a nation of men blind from their infancy, among whom a stranger arrives, the only man who can

see in all the country; let us suppose this stranger travelling with some of the natives, and that one while he foretels to them that, in case they walk straight forward, in half a hour they shall meet men or cattle, or come to a house; that, if they turn to the right and proceed, they shall in a few minutes be in danger of falling down a precipice; that, shaping their course to the left, they will in such a time arrive at a river, a wood, or a mountain. What think you? Must they not be infinitely surprised that one who had never been in their country before should know it so much better than themselves? And would not those predictions seem to them as unaccountable and incredible as Prophecy to a minute philosopher?

Alc. I cannot deny it.

Euph. But it seems to require intense thought to be able to unravel a prejudice that has been so long forming; to get over the vulgar errors or ideas common to both senses; and so to distinguish between the objects of sight and touch[97], which have grown (if I may so say), blended together in our fancy, as to be able to suppose ourselves exactly in the state that one of those men would be in, if he were made to see. And yet this I believe is possible, and might seem worth the pains of a little thinking, especially to those men whose proper employment and profession it is to think, and unravel prejudices, and confute mistakes.

Alc. I frankly own I cannot find my way out of this maze, and should gladly be set right by those who see better than myself.

Cri. The pursuing this subject in their own thoughts would possibly open a new scene to those speculative gentlemen of the minute philosophy. It puts me in mind of a passage in the Psalmist, where he represents God to be covered with light as with a garment, and would methinks be no ill comment on that ancient notion of some eastern sages—that God had light for His body, and truth for His soul[98].

This conversation lasted till a servant came to tell us the tea

[97] [See the annexed Treatise, wherein this point and the whole Theory of Vision are more fully explained: the paradoxes of which Theory, though at first received with great ridicule by those who think ridicule the test of truth, were many years after surprisingly confirmed, by a case of a person made to see who had been blind from his birth. See *Philos. Transact.*, No. 402.]—AUTHOR. What follows the colon is contained in the second edition only.

[98] Cf. *Siris*, sect. 178, 179.

was ready: upon which we walked in, and found Lysicles at the tea-table.

16. As soon as we sat down, I am glad, said Alciphron, that I have here found my second, a fresh man to maintain our common cause, which, I doubt, Lysicles will think hath suffered by his absence.

Lys. Why so?

Alc. I have been drawn into some concessions you will not like.

Lys. Let me know what they are.

Alc. Why, that there is such a thing as a God, and that His existence is very certain.

Lys. Bless me! How came you to entertain so wild a notion?

Alc. You know we profess to follow reason wherever it leads. And in short I have been reasoned into it.

Lys. Reasoned! You should say, amused with words, bewildered with sophistry.

Euph. Have you a mind to hear the same reasoning that led Alciphron and me step by step, that we may examine whether it be sophistry or no?

Lys. As to that I am very easy. I guess all that can be said on that head. It shall be my business to help my friend out, whatever arguments drew him in.

Euph. Will you admit the premises and deny the conclusions?

Lys. What if I admit the conclusion?

Euph. How! will you grant there is a God?

Lys. Perhaps I may.

Euph. Then we are agreed.

Lys. Perhaps not.

Euph. O Lysicles, you are a subtle adversary. I know not what you would be at.

Lys. You must know then that at bottom the being of a God is a point in itself of small consequence, and a man may make this concession without yielding much. The great point is what sense the word *God* is to be taken in[99]. The very Epicureans

[99] The discussion here (sect. 16—24) turns to the kind of existence which we may attribute to God, and the sort of knowledge of Him that is possible. Is it proper and immediate, or merely analogical knowledge? If analogical merely, is it true and real, or only metaphorical and illusory?

allowed the being of gods; but then they were indolent gods, unconcerned with human affairs. Hobbes allowed a corporeal God: and Spinosa held the universe to be God. And yet nobody doubts they were staunch free-thinkers. I could wish indeed the word God were quite omitted; because in most minds it is coupled with a sort of superstitious awe, the very root of all religion. I shall not, nevertheless, be much disturbed, though the name be retained, and the being of a God allowed in any sense but in that of a Mind—which knows all things, and beholds human actions, like some judge or magistrate, with infinite observation and intelligence. The belief of a God in this sense fills a man's mind with scruples, lays him under constraints, and embitters his very being: but in another sense it may be attended with no great ill consequence. This I know was the opinion of our great Diagoras, who told me he would never have been at the pains to find out a demonstration[100] that there was no God, if the received notion of God had been the same with that of some Fathers and Schoolmen.

Euph. Pray what was that?

17. *Lys.* You must know, Diagoras, a man of much reading and inquiry, had discovered that once upon a time the most profound and speculative divines, finding it impossible to reconcile the attributes of God, taken in the common sense, or in any known sense, with human reason, and the appearances of things, taught that the words *knowledge*, *wisdom*, *goodness*, and such like, when spoken of the Deity, must be understood in a quite different sense from what they signify in the vulgar acceptation, or from anything that we can form a notion of or conceive. Hence, whatever objections might be made against the attributes of God they easily solved—by denying those attributes belonged to God, in this, or that, or any known particular sense or notion; which was the same thing as to deny they belonged to Him at all. And thus denying the attributes of God, they in effect denied His being, though perhaps they were not aware of it.

Suppose, for instance, a man should object that future contingencies were inconsistent with the Foreknowledge of God, because

[100] Cf. 'Advertisement,' and Dial. I. sect. 12.

it is repugnant that certain knowledge should be of an uncertain thing: it was a ready and an easy answer to say that this may be true with respect to knowledge taken in the common sense, or in any sense that we can possibly form any notion of; but that there would not appear the same inconsistency between the contingent nature of things and Divine Foreknowledge, taken to signify somewhat that we know nothing of, which in God supplies the place of what we understand by knowledge; from which it differs not in quantity or degree of perfection, but altogether, and in kind, as light doth from sound;—and even more, since these agree in that they are both sensations; whereas knowledge in God hath no sort of resemblance or agreement with any notion that man can frame of knowledge. The like may be said of all the other attributes, which indeed may by this means be equally reconciled with everything or with nothing. But all men who think must needs see this is cutting knots and not untying them. For, how are things reconciled with the Divine attributes when these attributes themselves are in every intelligible sense denied; and, consequently, the very notion of God taken away, and nothing left but the name, without any meaning annexed to it? In short, the belief that there is an unknown subject[1] of attributes absolutely unknown is a very innocent doctrine; which the acute Diagoras well saw, and was therefore wonderfully delighted with this system.

18. For, said he, if this could once make its way and obtain in the world, there would be an end of all natural or rational religion, which is the basis both of the Jewish and the Christian: for he who comes to God, or enters himself in the church of God, must first believe that there is a God in some intelligible sense; and not only that there is *something in general*, without any proper notion, though never so inadequate, of any of its qualities or attributes: for this may be fate, or chaos, or plastic nature, or anything else as well as God. Nor will it avail to say—There is something in this unknown being *analogous* to knowledge and goodness; that is to say, which produceth those effects which we

[1] e. g. like the unknown material substance against which Berkeley argues in his *Principles*, and *Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*. But then he acknowledges sensible attributes.

could not conceive to be produced by men, in any degree, without knowledge and goodness. For, this is in fact to give up the point in dispute between theists and atheists—the question having always been, not whether there was a Principle (which point was allowed by all philosophers, as well before as since Anaxagoras), but whether this Principle was a *νοῦς*, a thinking intelligent being: that is to say, whether that order, and beauty, and use, visible in natural effects, could be produced by anything but a Mind or Intelligence, in the proper sense of the word? And whether there must not be true, real, and proper knowledge, in the First Cause? We will, therefore, acknowledge that all those natural effects which are vulgarly ascribed to knowledge and wisdom proceed from a being in which there is, properly speaking, no knowledge or wisdom at all, but only something else, which in reality is the cause of those things which men, for want of knowing better, ascribe to what they call knowledge and wisdom and understanding. You wonder perhaps to hear a man of pleasure, who diverts himself as I do, philosophize at this rate. But you should consider that much is to be got by conversing with ingenious men, which is a short way to knowledge, that saves a man the drudgery of reading and thinking.

And, now we have granted to you that there is a God in this indefinite sense, I would fain see what use you can make of this concession. You cannot argue from unknown attributes, or, which is the same thing, from attributes in an unknown sense. You cannot prove that God is to be loved for His goodness, or feared for His justice, or respected for His knowledge: all which consequences, we own, would follow from those attributes admitted in an intelligible sense. But we deny that those or any other consequences can be drawn from attributes admitted in no particular sense, or in a sense which none of us understand. Since, therefore, nothing can be inferred from such an account of God, about conscience, or worship or religion, you may even make the best of it. And, not to be singular, we will use the name too, and so at once there is an end of atheism.

Euph. This account of a Deity is new to me. I do not like it, and therefore shall leave it to be maintained by those who do.

19. ***Cri.*** It is not new to me. I remember not long since to

have heard a minute philosopher triumph upon this very point; which put me on inquiring what foundation there was for it in the Fathers or Schoolmen. And, for aught that I can find, it owes its original to those writings which have been published under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite[2]. The author of which, it must be owned, hath written upon the Divine attributes in a very singular style. In his treatise of the Celestial Hierarchy[3], he saith that God is something above all essence and life, *ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν οὐσίαν καὶ ζωὴν*; and again, in his treatise of the Divine Names[4], that He is above all wisdom and understanding, *ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν, ineffable and innominable, ἄῤῥητος καὶ ἀμώνυμος*; the wisdom of God he terms an unreasonable, unintelligent, and foolish wisdom; *τὴν ἄλογον, καὶ ἄνουν, καὶ μωρὰν σοφίαν*. But then the reason he gives for expressing himself in this strange manner is, that the Divine wisdom is the cause of all reason, wisdom, and understanding, and therein are contained the treasures of all wisdom and knowledge. He calls God *ὑπέρσοφος* and *ὑπέρζως*; as if wisdom and life were words not worthy to express the Divine perfections: and he adds that the attributes unintelligent and unperceiving must be ascribed to the Divinity, not *κατ' ἔλλειψιν*, by way of defect, but *καθ' ὑπεροχὴν*, by way of eminency; which he explains by our giving the name of darkness to light inaccessible. And, notwithstanding the harshness of his expressions in some places, he affirms over and over in others—that God knows all things; not that He is beholden to the creatures for His knowledge, but by knowing Himself, from whom they all derive their being, and in whom they are contained as in their cause. It was late before these writings appear to have been known in

[2] The books attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, who was said to be a contemporary of the Apostles, and first Bishop of Athens, were in vogue among the mystics of the middle ages. They belong probably to the third or fourth century, if not to a later period. They are entitled *De Hierarchia Cœlestia, De Nominibus Divinis, De Hierarchia Ecclesiastica*, and *De Theologia Mystica*. Various editions of them appeared in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In common with many works of the early Fathers of the Church, they allege, in the strongest language, man's necessary ignorance of God, and deny that even the term *οὐσια*, or substance, can properly be applied to Him. God, according to the pseudo-Dionysius, transcends all negation and affirmation (*ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν καὶ ἀφαίρεσιν καὶ θέσιν*). In fact, the hyperbolical language attributed to Dionysius, and employed by some Fathers of the Church, hardly falls short of the paradox of Oken, which identifies God with Nothing. He is *ὑπεράγνωστος* (more than unknown), *ἀνύπαρκτος* (without existence), *ἀνούσιος* (unsubstantial).

[3] [*De Hierarch. Cœlest.* cap. 2.]—Author.

[4] [*De Nom. Div.* cap. 7.]—Author.

the world; and, although they obtained credit during the age of the Schoolmen, yet, since critical learning hath been cultivated, they have lost that credit, and are at this day given up for spurious, as containing several evident marks of a much later date than the age of Dionysius. Upon the whole, although this method of growing in expression and dwindling in notion, of clearing up doubts by nonsense, and avoiding difficulties by running into affected contradictions, may perhaps proceed from a well-meant zeal, yet it appears not to be according to knowledge; and, instead of reconciling atheists to the truth, hath, I doubt, a tendency to confirm them in their own persuasion. It should seem, therefore, very weak and rash in a Christian to adopt this harsh language of an apocryphal writer preferably to that of the Holy Scriptures. I remember, indeed, to have read of a certain philosopher, who lived some centuries ago, that used to say—if these supposed works of Dionysius had been known to the primitive Fathers, they would have furnished them admirable weapons against the heretics, and would have saved a world of pains. But the event since their discovery hath by no means confirmed his opinion.

It must be owned, the celebrated Picus of Mirandula[5], among his nine hundred conclusions (which that prince, being very young, proposed to maintain by public disputation at Rome), hath this for one—to wit, that it is more improper to say of God, He is an intellect or intelligent Being, than to say of a reasonable soul that it is an angel: which doctrine it seems was not relished. And Picus, when he comes to defend it, supports himself altogether by the example and authority of Dionysius, and in effect explains it away into a mere verbal difference—affirming that neither Dionysius nor himself ever meant to deprive God of knowledge, or to deny that He knows all things; but that, as reason is of kind peculiar to man, so by intellection he understands a kind or manner of knowing peculiar to angels; and that the knowledge which is in God is more above the intellection of angels than angel is above man. He adds

[5] John Picus, Count of Mirandula, who lived in the fifteenth century, sought to harmonize Plato and Aristotle, and referred the philosophy of Plato to the books of Moses. The disputation in which he proposed to defend his famous nine hundred theses never took place. They were published at Rome in 1486.

that, as his tenet consists with admitting the most perfect knowledge in God, so he would by no means be understood to exclude from the Deity intellection itself, taken in the common or general sense, but only that peculiar sort of intellection proper to angels, which he thinks ought not to be attributed to God any more than human reason. Picus[6], therefore, though he speaks as the apocryphal Dionysius, yet, when he explains himself, it is evident he speaks like other men. And, although the forementioned books of the Celestial Hierarchy and of the Divine Names, being attributed to a saint and martyr of the apostolical age, were respected by the Schoolmen, yet it is certain they rejected or softened his harsh expressions, and explained away or reduced his doctrine to the received notions taken from Holy Scripture and the light of nature.

20. Thomas Aquinas expresseth his sense of this point in the following manner. All perfections, saith he, derived from God to the creatures are in a certain higher sense, or (as the Schoolmen term it) eminently in God. Whenever, therefore, a name borrowed from any perfection in the creature is attributed to God, we must exclude from its signification everything that belongs to the imperfect manner wherein that attribute is found in the creature. Whence he concludes that knowledge in God is not a habit but a pure act[7]. And again, the same Doctor observes that our intellect gets its notions of all sorts of perfections from the creatures, and that as it apprehends those perfections so it signifies them by names. Therefore, saith he, in attributing these names to God we are to consider two things: first the perfections themselves, as goodness, life, and the like, which are properly in God; and secondly, the manner which is peculiar to the creature, and cannot, strictly and properly speaking, be said to agree to the Creator[8].

And although Suarez, with other Schoolmen, teacheth that the mind of man conceiveth knowledge and will to be in God as faculties or operations, by analogy only to created beings, yet he gives it plainly as his opinion that when

[6] [*Pic. Mirand. in Apolog.* p. 155, ed. Bas.]—Author.

[7] [*Sum. Theolog.* p. I. quest. xiv. art. 1.]—Author.

[8] [*Ibid.* quest. xiii. art. iii.]—Author.

knowledge is said not to be properly in God it must be understood in a sense including imperfection, such as discursive knowledge, or the like imperfect kind found in the creatures: and that, none of those imperfections in the knowledge of men or angels belonging to the formal notion of knowledge, or to knowledge as such, it will not thence follow that knowledge, in its proper formal sense, may not be attributed to God. And of knowledge taken in general for the clear evident understanding of all truth, he expressly affirms that it is in God, and that this was never denied by any philosopher who believed a God[9]. It was, indeed, a current opinion in the schools that even Being itself should be attributed analogically to God and the creatures. That is, they held that God, the supreme, independent, self-originate cause and source of all beings, must not be supposed to *exist* in the same sense with created beings; not that He exists less truly, properly, or formally than they, but only because He exists in a more eminent and perfect manner.

21. But, to prevent any man's being led, by mistaking the scholastic use of the terms *analogy* and *analogical*, into an opinion that we cannot frame in any degree a true and proper notion of attributes applied by analogy, or, in the school phrase, predicated analogically, it may not be amiss to inquire into the true sense and meaning of those words. Every one knows that *analogy* is a Greek word used by mathematicians to signify a similitude of proportions. For instance, when we observe that two is to six as three is to nine, this similitude or equality of proportion is termed analogy. And, although proportion strictly signifies the habitude or relation of one quantity to another, yet, in a looser and translated sense, it hath been applied to signify every other habitude; and, consequently, the term analogy comes to signify all similitude of relations or habitudes whatsoever. Hence the Schoolmen tell us there is analogy between intellect and sight; forasmuch as intellect is to the mind what sight is to the body, and that he who governs the state is analogous to him who steers a ship. Hence a prince is analogically styled a pilot, being to the state as a pilot is to his vessel[10].

[9] [*Suarez, Dis. Metaph.* tom. II. disp. xxx. sect. 15.]—Author.

[10] [Vide *Cajetan. de Nom. Analog.* cap. 3.]—Author.

For the further clearing of this point, it is to be observed that a twofold analogy is distinguished by the schoolmen —metaphorical and proper. Of the first kind there are frequent instances in Holy Scripture, attributing human parts and passions to God. When He is represented as having a finger, an eye, or an ear; when He is said to repent, to be angry, or grieved; every one sees that analogy is metaphorical. Because those parts and passions, taken in the proper signification, must in every degree necessarily, and from the formal nature of the thing, include imperfection. When, therefore, it is said—the finger of God appears in this or that event, men of common sense mean no more but that it is as truly ascribed to God as the works wrought by human fingers are to man: and so of the rest. But the case is different when wisdom and knowledge are attributed to God. Passions and senses, as such, imply defect; but in knowledge simply, or as such, there is no defect. Knowledge, therefore, in the proper formal meaning of the word, may be attributed to God proportionably, that is, preserving a proportion to the infinite nature of God. We may say, therefore, that as God is infinitely above man, so is the knowledge of God infinitely above the knowledge of man, and this is what Cajetan calls *analogia proprie facta*. And after this same analogy we must understand all those attributes to belong to the Deity which in themselves simply, and as such, denote perfection. We may, therefore, consistently with what hath been premised, affirm that all sorts of perfection which we can conceive in a finite spirit are in God, but without any of that allay which is found in the creatures. This doctrine, therefore, of analogical perfections in God, or our knowing God by analogy, seems very much misunderstood and misapplied by those who would infer from thence that we cannot frame any direct or proper notion, though never so inadequate, of knowledge or wisdom, as they are in the Deity; or understand any more of them than one born blind can of light and colours[11].

[11] The theory that man can have only an *analogical* knowledge of God and the supernatural was much discussed in the early part of last century. Among other replies to Toland's *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696) was a *Letter* by Peter Brown (or Browne), afterwards Bishop of Cork and Ross, which appeared in 1699. It is there maintained that we have no immediate or proper idea of God and His attributes, and that our only possible conception of things supernatural is by the mediation of our ideas of ourselves and of nature—in a word, by analogy. The author explains in detail what he means by

22. And now, gentlemen, it may be expected I should ask your pardon for having dwelt so long on a point of metaphysics, and introduced such unpolished and unfashionable writers as the Schoolmen into good company: but, as Lysicles gave the occasion, I leave him to answer for it.

Lys. I never dreamt of this dry dissertation. But, if I have been the occasion of discussing these scholastic points, by my unluckily mentioning the Schoolmen, it was my first fault of the kind, and I promise it shall be the last. The meddling with crabbed authors of any sort is none of my taste. I grant one meets now and then with a good notion in what we call dry writers, such a one for example as this I was speaking of, which I must own struck my fancy. But then, for these we have such as Prodicus or Diagoras, who look into obsolete books, and save the rest of us that trouble.

Cri. So you pin your faith upon them?

Lys. It is only for some odd opinions, and matters of fact, and critical points. Besides, we know the men to whom we give credit: they are judicious and honest, and have no end to serve but truth. And I am confident some author or other has maintained the forementioned notion in the same sense as Diagoras related it.

Cri. That may be. But it never was a received notion, and never will, so long as men believe a God: the same arguments that prove a first cause proving an intelligent cause;—intelligent, I say, in the proper sense; wise and good in the true and formal acceptation of the words. Otherwise, it is evident that every syllogism brought to prove those attributes, or, which is the same

this analogical knowledge of God, and vindicates his theory by the authority, among others, of early Fathers of the Church. In 1709, Archbishop King published a Sermon on the *Consistency of Predestination and Foreknowledge with the Freedom of Man's Will*, which he defended professedly on the same foundation of analogy; but in an incautious and indistinct manner, which seemed to imply that our highest conceptions of God are actually untrue—that they are mere metaphors, which mean nothing real. Bishop Brown restates and defends at great length his own doctrine of the nature and limits of our religious knowledge, in his *Procedure, Extent, and Limits of Human Understanding* (1728), and especially in his *Things Divine and Supernatural conceived by Analogy with Things Natural and Human* (1733). Brown, who was Provost of Trinity College, Dublin (1699–1710), when Berkeley was undergraduate and Fellow, was afterwards Bishop of Cork and Ross till his death in 1735. Tennemann says that Berkeley's *Alciphron* was written as a reply to him, although only the few sections in this Dialogue are devoted to analogy, which has since been a favourite theme with certain English divines and others.—See Skelton's *Letter to the Authors of the Divine Analogy and the Minute Philosopher*, in vol. v. of Skelton's Works.

thing, to prove the being of a God, will be found to consist of four terms, and consequently can conclude nothing. But for your part, Alciphron, you have been fully convinced that God is a thinking intelligent being, in the same sense with other spirits; though not in the same imperfect manner or degree[12].

23. *Alc.* And yet I am not without my scruples: for, with knowledge you infer wisdom, and with wisdom goodness. [[13]Though I cannot see that it is either wise or good to enact such laws as can never be obeyed.

Cri. Doth any one find fault with the exactness of geometrical rules, because no one in practice can attain to it? The perfection of a rule is useful, even though it is not reached. Many approach what all may fall short of.

Alc.] But how is it possible to conceive God so good and man so wicked? It may, perhaps, with some colour be alleged that a little soft shadowing of evil sets off the bright and luminous parts of the creation, and so contributes to the beauty of the whole piece; but for blots so large and so black it is impossible to account by that principle. That there should be so much vice, and so little virtue upon earth, and that the laws of God's kingdom should be so ill observed by His subjects, is what can never be reconciled with that surpassing wisdom and goodness of the supreme Monarch.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, would you argue that a state was ill administered, or judge of the manners of its citizens, by the disorders committed in the jail or dungeon?

Alc. I would not.

Euph. And, for aught we know, this spot, with the few sinners on it, bears no greater proportion to the universe of intelligences than a dungeon doth to a kingdom. It seems we are led not only by revelation, but by common sense, observing and inferring from the analogy of visible things, to conclude there are innumerable orders of intelligent beings more happy and more perfect than

[12] Berkeley, at least in his early writings, regards our knowledge of God as similar in origin to our knowledge of other finite spirits—different only in degree. He conceives the universe as a hierarchy of minds, with the Divine Mind supreme. In the essentially practical spirit of his philosophy, he eliminates the problem of the Infinite with its paradoxes and antinomies. Cf. Dial. III. sect. 10, 11, and Dial. VII. passim; also *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 81, 123; *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 119, 123—132; *Analyst*, passim.

[13] Added in second edition, omitted in later editions.

man; whose life is but a span, and whose place, this earthly globe, is but a point, in respect of the whole system of God's creation. We are dazzled, indeed, with the glory and grandeur of things here below, because we know no better. But, I am apt to think, if we knew what it was to be an angel for one hour, we should return to this world, though it were to sit on the brightest throne in it, with vastly more loathing and reluctance than we would now descend into a loathsome dungeon or sepulchre.

24. *Cri.* To me it seems natural that such a weak, passionate, and short-sighted creature as man should be ever liable to scruples of one kind or other. But, as this same creature is apt to be over-positive in judging, and over-hasty in concluding, it falls out that these difficulties and scruples about God's conduct are made objections to His being. And so men come to argue from their own defects against the Divine perfections. And, as the views and humours of men are different and often opposite, you may sometimes see them deduce the same atheistical conclusions from contrary premises. I knew an instance of this in two minute philosophers of my acquaintance, who used to argue each from his own temper against a Providence. One of them, a man of a choleric and vindictive spirit, said he could not believe a Providence, because London was not swallowed up or consumed by fire from heaven; the streets being, as he said, full of people who shew no other belief or worship of God but perpetually praying that He would damn, rot, sink, and confound them. The other, being of an indolent easy temper, concluded there could be no such thing as Providence; for that a being of consummate wisdom must needs employ himself better than in minding the prayers and actions and little interests of mankind.

Alc. After all, if God have no passions, how can it be true that vengeance is His? Or how can He be said to be jealous of His glory?

Cri. We believe that God executes vengeance without revenge, and is jealous without weakness, just as the mind of man sees without eyes, and apprehends without hands.

25. *Alc.* To put a period to this discourse, we will grant there is a God in this dispassionate sense: but what then? What hath

this to do with Religion or Divine worship? To what purpose are all these prayers, and praises, and thanksgivings, and singing of psalms, which the foolish vulgar call serving God? What sense, or use, or end is there in all these things?

Cri. We worship God, we praise and pray to Him: not because we think that He is proud of our worship, or fond of our praise or prayers, and affected with them as mankind are; or that all our service can contribute in the least degree to His happiness or good: but because it is good for us to be so disposed towards God: because it is just and right, and suitable to the nature of things, and becoming the relation we stand in to our supreme Lord and Governor.

Alc. If it be good for us to worship God, it should seem that the Christian Religion, which pretends to teach men the knowledge and worship of God, was of some use and benefit to mankind.

Cri. Doubtless.

Alc. If this can be made appear, I shall own myself very much mistaken.

Cri. It is now near dinner-time. Wherefore, if you please, we will put an end to this conversation for the present, and to-morrow morning resume our subject.

THE FIFTH DIALOGUE[14].

1. Minute philosophers join in the cry, and follow the scent, of others. 2. Worship prescribed by the Christian religion suitable to God and man. 3. Power and influence of the Druids. 4. Excellency and usefulness of the Christian religion. 5. It ennobles mankind, and makes them happy. 6. Religion neither bigotry nor superstition. 7. Physicians and physic for the soul. 8. Character of the clergy. 9. Natural religion and human reason not to be disparaged. 10. Tendency and use of the Gentile religion. 11. Good effects of Christianity. 12. Englishmen compared with ancient Greeks and Romans. 13. The modern practice of duelling. 14. Character of the old Romans, how to be formed. 15. Genuine fruits of the Gospel. 16. Wars and factions not an effect of the Christian religion. 17. Civil rage and massacres in Greece and Rome. 18. Virtue of the ancient Greeks. 19. Quarrels of polemical divines. 20. Tyranny, usurpation, and sophistry of Ecclesiastics. 21. The universities censured. 22. Divine writings of a certain modern critic. 23. Learning the effect of religion. 24. Barbarism of the schools. 25. Restoration of learning and polite arts, to whom owing. 26. Prejudice and ingratitude of minute philosophers. 27. Their pretensions and conduct inconsistent. 28. Men and brutes compared with respect to religion. 29. Christianity the only means to establish natural religion. 30. Free-thinkers mistake their talents; have a strong imagination. 31. Tithes and church-lands. 32. Men distinguished from human creatures. 33. Distribution of mankind into birds, beasts, and fishes. 34. Plea for reason allowed, but unfairness taxed. 35. Freedom a blessing, or a curse, as it is used. 36. Priestcraft not the reigning evil.

1. WE amused ourselves next day every one to his fancy till nine of the clock, when word was brought that the tea-table was set in the library, which is a gallery on the ground-floor, with an arched door at one end opening into a walk of limes; where, as soon as we had drunk tea, we were tempted by fine weather to take a walk which led us to a small mount of easy ascent, on the top whereof we found a seat under a spreading tree. Here we had a prospect on one hand of a narrow bay or creek of the sea, enclosed on either side by a coast beautified with rocks and woods, and green banks and farm-houses. At the end of the bay was a small town, placed upon the slope of a hill, which, from the advantage of its situation, made a considerable figure. Several fishing-boats and lighters, gliding up and down on a surface as

[14] The discussion here passes from General Ethics and Natural Religion to Christianity. The utility of the Christian worship and faith is the subject of the Fifth Dialogue.

smooth and bright as glass, enlivened the prospect. On the other side, we looked down on green pastures, flocks, and herds basking beneath in sunshine, while we, in our superior situation, enjoyed the freshness of air and shade.

Here we felt that sort of joyful instinct which a rural scene and fine weather inspire; and proposed no small pleasure in resuming and continuing our conference without interruption till dinner. But we had hardly seated ourselves and looked about us when we saw a fox run by the foot of our mount into an adjacent thicket. A few minutes after, we heard a confused noise of the opening of hounds, and winding of horns, and the roaring of country squires. While our attention was suspended by this event, a servant came running, out of breath, and told Crito that his neighbour Ctesippus, a squire of note, was fallen from his horse, attempting to leap over a hedge, and brought into the hall, where he lay for dead. Upon which we all rose, and walked hastily to the house, where we found Ctesippus just come to himself, in the midst of half-a-dozen sun-burnt squires, in frocks, and short wigs, and jockey-boots. Being asked how he did, he answered it was only a broken rib. With some difficulty Crito persuaded him to lie on a bed till the chirurgeon came. These fox-hunters, having been up early at their sport, were eager for dinner, which was accordingly hastened. They passed the afternoon in a loud rustic mirth, gave proof of their religion and loyalty by the healths they drank, talked of hounds, and horses, and elections, and country fairs, till the chirurgeon, who had been employed about Ctesippus, desired he might be put into Crito's coach, and sent home, having refused to stay all night.

Our guests being gone, we reposed ourselves after the fatigue of this tumultuous visit, and next morning assembled again at the seat on the mount.

Now Lysicles, being a nice man and a *bel esprit*, had an infinite contempt for the rough manners and conversation of fox-hunters, and could not reflect with patience that he had lost, as he called it, so many hours in their company. I flattered myself, said he, that there had been none of this species remaining among us: strange that men should be diverted with such uncouth noise and hurry, or find pleasure in the society of dogs and horses! How much more elegant are the diversions of the town!

There seems, replied Euphranor, to be some resemblance between fox-hunters and free-thinkers; the former exerting their animal faculties in pursuit of game, as you gentlemen employ your intellectuals in the pursuit of truth. The kind of amusement is the same, although the object be different.

Lys. I had rather be compared to any brute upon earth than a rational brute.

Cri. You would then have been less displeased with my friend Pythocles, whom I have heard compare the common sort of minute philosophers not to the hunters but the hounds. For, said he, you shall often see among the dogs a loud babbler, with a bad nose, lead the unskilful part of the pack, who join all in his cry without following any scent of their own, any more than the herd of free-thinkers follow their own reason.

2. But Pythocles was a blunt man, and must never have known such reasoners among them as you gentlemen, who can sit so long at an argument, dispute every inch of ground, and yet know when to make a reasonable concession.

Lys. I do not know how it comes to pass, but methinks Alciphron makes concession for himself and me too. For my own part, I am not altogether of such a yielding temper; but yet I do not care to be singular neither.

Cri. Truly, Alciphron, when I consider where we are got, and how far we are agreed, I conceive it probable we may agree altogether in the end. You have granted that a life of virtue is upon all accounts eligible, as most conducive both to the general and particular good of mankind; and you allow that the beauty of virtue alone is not a sufficient motive with mankind to the practice of it. This led you to acknowledge that the belief of a God would be very useful in the world; and that, consequently, you should be disposed to admit any reasonable proof of His being: which point hath been proved, and you have admitted the proof.

If then we admit a Divinity, why not Divine worship? And if worship, why not religion to teach this worship? And if a religion, why not the Christian, if a better cannot be assigned, and it be already established by the laws of our country, and handed down to us from our forefathers? Shall we believe a God, and not pray to him for future benefits, nor thank him for the past? Neither

trust in his protection, nor love his goodness, nor praise his wisdom, nor adore his power? And if these things are to be done, can we do them in a way more suitable to the dignity of God or man than is prescribed by the Christian religion?

Alc. I am not, perhaps, altogether sure that religion must be absolutely bad for the public: but I cannot bear to see policy and religion walk hand in hand. I do not like to see human rights attached to the Divine. I am for no *pontifex maximus*, such as in ancient or in modern Rome; no high-priest, as in Judea; no royal priests, as in Egypt and Sparta; no such things as Dairos of Japan, or Lamas of Tartary.

3. I knew a late witty gentleman of our sect who was a great admirer of the ancient Druids. He had a mortal antipathy to the present established religion, but used to say he should like well to see the Druids and their religion restored, as it anciently flourished in Gaul and Britain; for, it would be right enough that there should be a number of contemplative men set apart to preserve a knowledge of arts and sciences, to educate youth, and teach men the immortality of the soul and the moral virtues. Such, said he, were the Druids of old, and I should be glad to see them once more established among us.

Cri. How would you like, Alciphron, that priests should have power to decide all controversies, and adjudge property, distribute rewards and punishments; that all who did not acquiesce in their decrees should be excommunicated, held in abhorrence, excluded from all honours and privileges, and deprived of the common benefit of the laws; and that now and then a number of laymen should be crammed together in a wicker-idol, and burnt for an offering to their pagan gods? How should you like living under such priests and such a religion?

Alc. Not at all. Such a situation would by no means agree with free-thinkers.

Cri. And yet such were the Druids and such their religion, if we may trust Caesar's account of them[15].

Lys. I am now convinced more than ever there ought to be no such thing as an established religion of any kind. Certainly all

[15] [*De Bello Gallico*, lib. VI. 16.]—AUTHOR.

the nations of the world have been hitherto out of their wits. Even the Athenians themselves, the wisest and freest people upon earth, had I know not what foolish attachment to their established church. They offered, it seems, a talent as a reward to whoever should kill Diagoras the Melian, a free-thinker of those times, who derided their mysteries: and Protagoras, another of the same turn, narrowly escaped being put to death, for having wrote something that seemed to contradict their received notions of the gods. Such was the treatment our generous sect met with at Athens. And I make no doubt that these Druids would have sacrificed many a holocaust of free-thinkers. I would not give a single farthing to exchange one religion for another. Away with all together, root and branch, or you had as good do nothing. No Druids or priests of any sort for me: I see no occasion for any of them.

4. ***Euph.*** What Lysicles saith puts me in mind of the close of our last conference, wherein it was agreed in the following to resume the point we were then entered upon:—to wit, the use or benefit of the Christian religion, which Alciphron expected Crito should make appear.

Cri. I am the readier to undertake this point, because I conceive it to be no difficult one, and that one great mark of the truth of Christianity is, in my mind, its tendency to do good, which seems the north star to conduct our judgment in moral matters, and in all things of a practical nature; moral or practical truths being ever connected with universal benefit. But, to judge rightly of this matter, we should endeavour to act like Lysicles upon another occasion, taking into our view the sum of things, and considering principles as branched forth into consequences to the utmost extent we are able. We are not so much to regard the humour, or caprice, or imaginary distresses of a few idle men, whose conceit may be offended though their conscience cannot be wounded; but fairly to consider the true interest of individuals, as well as of human society. Now, the Christian religion, considered as a fountain of light, and joy, and peace; as a source of faith, and hope, and charity (and that it is so will be evident to whoever takes his notion of it from the gospel), must needs be a principle of happiness and virtue. And he who sees not that the destroying the

principles of good actions must destroy good actions sees nothing: and he who, seeing this, shall yet persist to do it, if he be not wicked, who is?

5. To me it seems the man can see neither deep nor far, who is not sensible of his own misery, sinfulness, and dependence; who doth not perceive that this present world is not designed or adapted to make rational souls happy; who would not be glad of getting into a better state; and who would not be overjoyed to find that the road leading thither was the love of God and man, the practising every virtue, the living reasonably while we are here upon earth, proportioning our esteem to the value of things, and so using this world as not to abuse it. For this is what Christianity requires. It neither enjoins the nastiness of the Cynic, nor the insensibility of the Stoic. Can there be a higher ambition than to overcome the world, or a wiser than to subdue ourselves, or a more comfortable doctrine than the remission of sins, or a more joyful prospect than that of having our base nature renewed and assimilated to the Deity, our being made fellow-citizens with angels, and sons of God? Did ever Pythagoreans, or Platonists, or Stoics, even in idea or in wish, propose to the mind of man purer means, or a nobler end? How great a share of our happiness depends upon hope! How totally is this extinguished by the minute philosophy! On the other hand, how is it cherished and raised by the gospel! Let any man who thinks in earnest but consider these things, and then say which he thinks deserveth best of mankind—he who recommends, or he who runs down Christianity? Which he thinks likelier to lead a happy life, to be a hopeful son, an honest dealer, a worthy patriot—he who sincerely believes the gospel, or he who believes not one tittle of it? He who aims at being a child of God, or he who is contented to be thought, and to be, one of Epicurus's hogs? And, in fact, do but scan the characters, and observe the behaviour of the common sort of men on both sides: observe, and say which live most agreeably to the dictates of reason? How things should be, the reason is plain; how they are, I appeal to fact.

6. *Alc.* It is wonderful to observe how things change appearance, as they are viewed in different lights, or by different eyes.

The picture, Crito, that I form of religion is very unlike yours, when I consider how it unmans the soul, filling it with absurd reveries, and slavish fears; how it extinguishes the gentle passions, inspiring a spirit of malice, and rage, and persecution; when I behold bitter resentments and unholy wrath in those very men who preach up meekness and charity to others.

Cri. It is very possible that gentlemen of your sect may think religion a subject beneath their attention; but yet it seems that whoever sets up for opposing any doctrine should know what it is he disputes against. Know, then, that religion is the virtuous mean between incredulity and superstition. We do not therefore contend for superstitious follies, or for the rage of bigots. What we plead for is, religion against profaneness, law against confusion, virtue against vice, the hope of a Christian against the despondency of an atheist. I will not justify bitter resentments and unholy wrath in any man, much less in a Christian, and least of all in a clergyman. But, if sallies of human passion should sometimes appear even in the best, it will not surprise any one who reflects on the sarcasms and ill manners with which they are treated by the minute philosophers. For, as Cicero somewhere observes, *Habet quendam aculeum contumelia, quem pati prudentes ac viri boni difficillime possunt.* But, although you might sometimes observe particular persons, professing themselves Christians, run into faulty extremes of any kind, through passion and infirmity, while infidels of a more calm and dispassionate temper shall perhaps behave better—yet these natural tendencies on either side prove nothing, either in favour of infidel principles, or against Christian. If a believer doth evil, it is owing to the man, not to his belief. And if an infidel doth good, it is owing to the man, and not to his infidelity [16].

7. *Lys.* To cut this matter short, I shall borrow an allusion to physic, which one of you made use of against our sect. It will not be denied that the clergy pass for physicians of the soul, and that religion is a sort of medicine which they deal in and administer. If then souls in great numbers are diseased and lost, how can we think the physician skilful, or his physic good? It is a

[16] Cf. sect. 15, 20.

common complaint that vice increases, and men grow daily more and more wicked. If a shepherd's flock be diseased or unsound, who is to blame but the shepherd, for neglecting, or not knowing how to cure them? A fig therefore for such shepherds, such physic, and such physicians, who, like other mountebanks, with great gravity, and elaborate harangues, put off their pills to the people, who are never the better for them.

Euph. Nothing seems more reasonable than this remark—that men should judge of a physician and his physic by its effect on the sick. But pray, Lysicles, would you judge of a physician by those sick who take his physic, and follow his prescriptions, or by those who do not?

Lys. Doubtless by those who do.

Euph. What shall we say then, if great numbers refuse to take the physic, or instead of it take poison of a direct contrary nature, prescribed by others, who make it their business to discredit the physician and his medicines, to hinder men from using them, and to destroy their effect by drugs of their own? Shall the physician be blamed for the miscarriage of those people?

Lys. By no means.

Euph. By a parity of reason, should it not follow that the tendency of religious doctrines ought to be judged of by the effects which they produce, not upon all who hear them, but upon those only who receive or believe them?

Lys. It seems so.

Euph. Therefore, to proceed fairly, shall we not judge of the effects of religion by the religious, of faith by believers, of Christianity by Christians?

8. *Lys.* But I doubt these sincere believers are very few.

Euph. But will it not suffice to justify our principles, if, in proportion to the numbers which receive them, and the degree of faith with which they are received, they produce good effects? Perhaps the number of believers are not so few as you imagine; and if they were, whose fault is that so much as of those who make it their professed endeavour to lessen that number? And who are those but the minute philosophers?

Lys. I tell you it is owing to the clergy themselves, to the wickedness and corruption of clergymen.

Euph. And who denies but there may be minute philosophers even among the clergy?

Cri. In so numerous a body it is to be presumed there are men of all sorts. But, notwithstanding the cruel reproaches cast upon that order by their enemies, an equal observer of men and things will, if I mistake not, be inclined to think those reproaches owing as much to other faults as those of the clergy; especially if he considers the declamatory manner of those who censure them.

Euph. My knowledge of the world is too narrow for me to pretend to judge of the virtue, and merit, and liberal attainments of men in the several professions. Besides, I should not care for the odious work of comparison. But I may venture to say the clergy of this country where I live are by no means a disgrace to it; on the contrary, the people seem much the better for their example and doctrine. But supposing the clergy to be (what all men certainly are) sinners and faulty; supposing you might spy out here and there among them even great crimes and vices, what can you conclude against the profession itself from its unworthy professors, any more than from the pride, pedantry, and bad lives of some philosophers against philosophy, or of lawyers against law?

9. It is certainly right to judge of principles from their effects; but then we must know them to be effects of those principles. It is the very method I have observed with respect to religion and the minute philosophy. And I can honestly aver that I never knew any man or family grow worse in proportion as they grew religious: but I have often observed that minute philosophy is the worst thing that can get into a family, the readiest way to impoverish, divide, and disgrace it.

Alc. By the same method of tracing causes from their effects, I have made it my observation that the love of truth, virtue, and the happiness of mankind are specious pretexts, but not the inward principles that set divines at work: else why should they affect to abuse human reason, to disparage natural religion, to traduce the philosophers, as they universally do?

Cri. Not so universally perhaps as you imagine. A Christian, indeed, is for confining reason within its due bounds; and so is every reasonable man. If we are forbid meddling with un-

profitable questions, vain philosophy, and science falsely so called, it cannot be thence inferred that all inquiries into profitable questions, useful philosophy, and true science are unlawful. A minute philosopher may indeed impute, and perhaps a weak brother may imagine, those inferences, but men of sense will never make them. God is the common father of lights; and all knowledge really such, whether natural or revealed, is derived from the same source of light and truth. To amass together authorities upon so plain a point would be needless. It must be owned some men's attributing too much to human reason hath, as is natural, made others attribute too little to it. But thus much is generally acknowledged—that there is a natural religion, which may be discovered and proved by the light of reason, to those who are capable of such proofs. But it must be withal acknowledged that precepts and oracles from heaven are incomparably better suited to popular improvement and the good of society than the reasonings of philosophers; and, accordingly, we do not find that natural or rational religion, as such, ever became the popular national religion of any country.

10. *Alc.* It cannot be denied that in all heathen countries there have been received, under the colour of religion, a world of fables and superstitious rites. But I question whether they were so absurd and of so bad influence as is vulgarly represented, since their respective legislators and magistrates must, without doubt, have thought them useful.

Cri. It were needless to inquire into all the rites and notions of the Gentile world. This hath been largely done when it was thought necessary. And whoever thinks it worth while may be easily satisfied about them. But as to the tendency and usefulness of the heathen religion in general, I beg leave to mention a remark of St. Augustine's [17], who observes that the heathens in their religion had no assemblies for preaching, wherein the people were to be instructed what duties or virtues the gods required, no place or means to be taught what Persius [18] exhorts them to learn:—

> Disciteque ô miseri, et causas cognoscite rerum,
> Quid sumus, et quidnam victuri gignimur.

[17] [*De Civitate Dei*, lib. II.]—Author.

[18] [*Sat.* III.]—Author.

Alc. This is the true spirit of the party, never to allow a grain of use or goodness to anything out of their own pale; but we have had learned men who have done justice to the religion of the Gentiles.

Cri. We do not deny but there was something useful in the old religions of Rome and Greece, and some other pagan countries. On the contrary, we freely own they produced some good effects on the people. But then these good effects were owing to the truths contained in those false religions: the truer therefore the more useful. I believe you will find it a hard matter to produce any useful truth, any moral precept, any salutary principle or notion, in any Gentile system, either of religion or philosophy, which is not comprehended in the Christian, and either enforced by stronger motives, or supported by better authority, or carried to a higher point of perfection.

11. *Alc.* Consequently you would have us think ourselves a finer people than the ancient Greeks or Romans.

Cri. If by finer you mean better, perhaps we are; and if we are not, it is not owing to the Christian religion, but to the want of it.

Alc. You say 'perhaps we are.' I do not pique myself on my reading: but should be very ignorant to be capable of being imposed on in so plain a point. What! compare Cicero or Brutus to an English patriot, or Seneca to one of our parsons! Then that invincible constancy and vigour of mind, that disinterested and noble virtue, that adorable public spirit you so much admire, are things in them so well known, and so different from our manners, that I know not how to excuse your *perhaps*. Euphranor, indeed, who passeth his life in this obscure corner, may possibly mistake the characters of our times, but you who know the world, how could you be guilty of such a mistake?

Cri. O Alciphron, I would by no means detract from the noble virtue of ancient heroes. But I observe those great men were not the minute philosophers of their times; that the best principles upon which they acted are common to them with Christians, of whom it would be no difficult matter to assign, if not in our own times, yet within the compass of our own history, many instances in every kind of worth and virtue, public or private, equal to the most celebrated of the ancients. Though perhaps their story

might not have been so well told, set off with such fine lights and colourings of style, or so vulgarly known and considered by every schoolboy. But though it should be granted that here and there a Greek or Roman genius, bred up under strict laws and severe discipline, animated to public virtue by statues, crowns, triumphal arches, and such rewards and monuments of great actions, might attain to a character and fame beyond other men; yet this will prove only that they had more spirit, and lived under a civil polity more wisely ordered in certain points than ours; which advantages of nature and civil institution will be no argument for their religion, or against ours. On the contrary, it seems an invincible proof of the power and excellency of the Christian religion that, without the help of those civil institutions and incentives to glory, it should be able to inspire a phlegmatic people with the noblest sentiments, and soften the rugged manners of northern boors into gentleness and humanity [19]; and that these good qualities should become national, and rise and fall in proportion to the purity of our religion, as it approaches to, or recedes from, the plan laid down in the gospel.

12. To make a right judgment of the effects of the Christian religion, let us take a survey of the prevailing notions and manners of this very country where we live, and compare them with those of our heathen predecessors.

Alc. I have heard much of the glorious light of the gospel, and should be glad to see some effects of it in my own dear country, which, by the bye, is one of the most corrupt and profligate upon earth, notwithstanding the boasted purity of our religion. But it would look mean and diffident to affect a comparison with the barbarous heathen from whence we drew our original. If you would do honour to your religion, dare to make it with the most renowned heathens of antiquity.

Cri. It is a common prejudice to despise the present, and overrate remote times and things. Something of this seems to enter into the judgments men make of the Greeks and Romans. For, though it must be allowed those nations produced some noble spirits, and great patterns of virtue, yet, upon the whole, it seems

[19] Cf. sect. 14, 23; also Dial. II. 17, III. 12.

to me they were much inferior, in point of real virtue and good morals, even to this corrupt and profligate nation, as you are now pleased to call it in dishonour to our religion; however you may think fit to characterize it when you would do honour to the minute philosophy. This, I think, will be plain to any one who shall turn off his eyes from a few shining characters, to view the general manners and customs of those people. Their insolent treatment of captives, even of the highest rank and softer sex, their unnatural exposing of their own children, their bloody gladiatorian spectacles, compared with the common notions of Englishmen, are to me a plain proof that our minds are much softened by Christianity. Could anything be more unjust than the condemning a young lady to the most infamous punishment and death for the guilt of her father, or a whole family of slaves, perhaps some hundreds, for a crime committed by one? Or more abominable than their bacchanals and unbridled lusts of every kind? which, notwithstanding all that has been done by minute philosophers to debauch the nation, and their successful attempts on some parts of it, have not yet been matched among us, at least not in every circumstance of impudence and effrontery. While the Romans were poor they were temperate; but, as they grew rich, they became luxurious to a degree that is hardly believed or conceived by us. It cannot be denied the old Roman spirit was a great one. But it is as certain there have been numberless examples of the most resolute and clear courage in Britons, and in general from a religious cause. Upon the whole, it seems an instance of the greatest blindness and ingratitude that we do not see and own the exceeding great benefits of Christianity, which, to omit higher considerations, hath so visibly softened, polished, and embellished our manners.

13. *Alc.* O Crito! we are alarmed at cruelty in a foreign shape, but overlook it in a familiar one. Else how is it possible that you should not see the inhumanity of that barbarous custom of duelling, a thing avowed, and tolerated, and even reputable among us? Or that, seeing this, you should suppose our Englishmen of a more gentle disposition than the old Romans, who were altogether strangers to it?

Cri. I will by no means make an apology for every Goth that

walks the streets, with a determined purpose to murder any man who shall but spit in his face, or give him the lie. Nor do I think the Christian religion is in the least answerable for a practice so directly opposite to its precepts, and which obtains only among the idle part of the nation, your men of fashion; who, instead of law, reason, or religion, are governed by fashion. Be pleased to consider that what may be, and truly is, a most scandalous reproach to a Christian country, may be none at all to the Christian religion: for the Pagan encouraged men in several vices, but the Christian in none.

Alc. Give me leave to observe that what you now say is foreign to the purpose. For, the question, at present, is not concerning the respective tendencies of the Pagan and the Christian religions, but concerning our manners, as actually compared with those of ancient heathens, who, I aver, had no such barbarous custom as duelling.

Cri. And I aver that, bad as this is, they had a worse: and that was poisoning. By which we have reason to think there were many more lives destroyed than by this Gothic crime of duelling: inasmuch as it extended to all ages, sexes, and characters, and as its effects were more secret and unavoidable; and as it had more temptations, interest as well as passion, to recommend it to wicked men. And for the fact, not to waste time, I refer you to the Roman authors themselves.

Lys. It is very true. Duelling is not so general a nuisance as poisoning, nor of so base a nature. This crime, if it be a crime, is in a fair way to keep its ground in spite of the law and the gospel. The clergy never preach against it, because themselves never suffer by it: and the man of honour must not appear against the means of vindicating honour.

Cri. Though it be remarked by some of your sect, that the clergy are not used to preach against duelling, yet I neither think the remark itself just, nor the reason assigned for it. In effect, one half of their sermons, all that is said of charity, brotherly love, forbearance, meekness, and forgiving injuries, is directly against this wicked custom; by which the clergy themselves are so far from never suffering, that perhaps they will be found, all things considered, to suffer oftener than other men.

Lys. How do you make this appear?

Cri. An observer of mankind may remark two kinds of bully, the fighting and the tame, both public nuisances; the former (who is the more dangerous animal, but by much the less common of the two) employs himself wholly and solely against the laity, while the tame species exert their talents upon the clergy. The qualities constituent of this tame bully are natural rudeness joined with a delicate sense of danger. For, you must know, the force of inbred insolence and ill manners is not diminished, though it acquire a new determination, from the fashionable custom of calling men to account for their behaviour. Hence you may often see one of these tame bullies ready to burst with pride and ill-humour, which he dares not vent, till a parson has come in the way to his relief. And the man of raillery, who would as soon bite off his tongue as break a jest on the profession of arms in the presence of a military man, shall instantly brighten up, and assume a familiar air with religion and the church before ecclesiastics. Dorcon, who passeth for a poltroon and stupid in all other company, and really is so, when he is got among clergymen affects a quite opposite character. And many Dorcons there are, who owe their wit and courage to this passive order.

14. *Alc.* But to return to the point in hand, can you deny the old Romans were as famous for justice and integrity as men in these days for the contrary qualities?

Cri. The character of the Romans is not to be taken from the sentiments of Tully, or Cato's actions, or a shining passage here and there in their history, but from the prevailing tenor of their lives and notions. Now, if they and our modern Britons were weighed in this same equal balance, you will, if I mistake not, appear to have been prejudiced in favour of the old Romans against your own country—probably because it professeth Christianity. Whatever instances of fraud or injustice may be seen in Christians carry their own censure with them, in the care that is taken to conceal them, and the shame that attends their discovery. There is, even at this day, a sort of modesty in all our public councils and deliberations. And I believe the boldest of our minute philosophers would hardly undertake, in a popular assembly, to propose anything parallel to the rape of the Sabines, the most unjust usage of Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, or the

ungrateful treatment of Camillus; which, as a learned father observes, were instances of iniquity agreed to by the public body of the Romans. And if Rome in her early days were capable of such flagrant injustice, it is most certain she did not mend her manners as she grew great in wealth and empire, having produced monsters in every kind of wickedness, as far exceeding other men as they surpassed them in power. I freely acknowledge the Christian religion hath not had the same influence upon the nation that it would in case it had been always professed in its purity, and cordially believed by all men. But I will venture to say that if you take the Roman history from one end to the other, and impartially compare it with your own, you will neither find them so good, nor your countrymen so bad, as you imagine. On the contrary, an indifferent eye may, I verily think, perceive a vein of charity and justice, the effect of Christian principles, run through the latter; which, though not equally discernible in all parts, yet discloseth itself sufficiently to make a wide difference upon the whole, in spite of the general appetites and passions of human nature, as well as of the particular hardness and roughness of the block out of which we were hewn [20]. And it is observable (what the Roman authors themselves do often suggest) that even their virtues and magnanimous actions rose and fell with a sense of Providence and a future state, and a philosophy the nearest to the Christian religion.

15. Crito having spoke thus paused.

But Alciphron, addressing himself to Euphranor and me, said—It is natural for men, according to their several educations and prejudices, to form contrary judgments upon the same things, which they view in very different lights. Crito, for instance, imagines that none but salutary effects proceed from religion: on the other hand, if you appeal to the general experience and observation of other men, you shall find it grown into a proverb that religion is the root of evil:—

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

And this not only among Epicureans or other ancient heathens, but among moderns speaking of the Christian religion. Now,

[20] Cf. sect. 11, 23.

methinks it is unreasonable to oppose against the general concurring opinion of the world, the observation of a particular person, or particular set of zealots, whose prejudice sticks close to them, and ever mixeth with their judgment; and who read, collect, and observe with an eye not to discover the truth, but to defend their prejudice.

Cri. Though I cannot think with Alciphron, yet I must own I admire his address and dexterity in argument. Popular and general opinion is by him represented, on certain occasions, to be a sure mark of error. But when it serves his ends that it should seem otherwise, he can as easily make it a character of truth. But it will by no means follow that a profane proverb, used by the friends and admired authors of a minute philosopher, must therefore be a received opinion, much less a truth grounded on the experience and observation of mankind. Sadness may spring from guilt or superstition, and rage from bigotry; but darkness might as well be supposed the natural effect of sunshine, as sullen and furious passions to proceed from the glad tidings and Divine precepts of the gospel. What is the sum and substance, scope and end of Christ's religion, but the love of God and man? To which all other points and duties are relative and subordinate, as parts or means, as signs, principles, motives, or effects. Now, I would fain know how it is possible for evil or wickedness of any kind to spring from such a source? I will not pretend there are no evil qualities in Christians, nor good in minute philosophers. But this I affirm, that, whatever evil is in us, our principles certainly lead to good; and, whatever good there may be in you, it is most certain your principles lead to evil [21].

16. *Alc.* It must be owned there is a fair outside, and many plausible things may be said for the Christian religion taken simply as it lies in the gospel. But it is the observation of one of our great writers [22], that the first Christian preachers very cunningly began with the fairest face and the best moral doctrines in the world. It was all love, charity, meekness, patience, and so forth. But when by this means they had drawn over the world and got power, they soon changed their appearance, and shewed cruelty, ambition, avarice, and every bad quality.

[21] Cf. sect. 6, 20.

[22] See Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, vol. III. pp. 114, 115.

Cri. That is to say, some men very cunningly preached and underwent a world of hardships, and laid down their lives to propagate the best principles and the best morals, to the end that others some centuries after might reap the benefit of bad ones. Whoever may be cunning, there is not much cunning in the maker of this observation.

Alc. And yet ever since this religion hath appeared in the world we have had eternal feuds, factions, massacres, and wars, the very reverse of that hymn with which it is introduced in the gospel:—'Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will towards men.'

Cri. This I will not deny. I will even own that the Gospel and the Christian religion have been often the pretexts for these evils; but it will not thence follow they were the cause. On the contrary, it is plain they could not be the real proper cause of these evils; because a rebellious, proud, revengeful, quarrelsome spirit is directly opposite to the whole tenor and most express precepts of Christianity: a point so clear that I shall not prove it. And, secondly, because all those evils you mention were as frequent, nay, much more frequent, before the Christian religion was known in the world. They are the common product of the passions and vices of mankind, which are sometimes covered with the mask of religion by wicked men, having the form of godliness without the power of it. This truth seems so plain that I am surprised how any man of sense, knowledge, and candour can make a doubt of it.

17. Take but a view of heathen Rome: what a scene is there of faction, and fury, and civil rage! Let any man consider the perpetual feuds between the patricians and plebeians, the bloody and inhuman factions of Marius and Sylla, Cinna and Octavius, and the vast havoc of mankind, during the two famous triumvirates. To be short, let any man of common candour and common sense but cast an eye from one end to the other of the Roman story, and behold that long scene of seditions, murders, massacres, proscriptions, and desolations of every kind, enhanced by every cruel circumstance of rage, rapine, and revenge; and then say, whether those evils were introduced into the world with the Christian religion, or whether they are not less frequent now than before?

Alc. The ancient Romans, it must be owned, had a high and fierce spirit, which produced eager contentions and very bloody catastrophes. The Greeks, on the other hand, were a polite and gentle sort of men, softened by arts and philosophy. It is impossible to think of the little states and cities of Greece without wishing to have lived in those times, without admiring their policy, and envying their happiness.

Cri. Men are apt to consider the dark sides of what they possess, and the bright ones of things out of their reach. A fine climate, elegant taste, polite amusements, love of liberty, and a most ingenious inventive spirit for arts and sciences were indisputable prerogatives of ancient Greece. But, as for peace and quietness, gentleness and humanity, I think we have plainly the advantage: for those envied cities composed of gentle Greeks were not without their factions, which persecuted each other with such treachery, rage, and malice that in respect of them our factious folk are mere lambs. To be convinced of this truth, you need only look into Thucydides [23], where you will find those cities in general involved in such bitter factions as for fellow-citizens without the formalities of war to murder one another, even in their senate-houses and their temples; no regard being had to merit, rank, obligation, or nearness of blood. And if human nature boiled up to so vehement a pitch in the politest people, what wonder that savage nations should scalp, roast, torture, and destroy each other, as they are known to do? It is therefore plain that without religion there would not be wanting pretexts for quarrels and debates; all which can very easily be accounted for by the natural infirmities and corruption of men. It would not perhaps be so easy to account for the blindness of those who impute the most hellish effects to the most Divine principle, if they could be supposed in earnest and to have considered the point. One may daily see ignorant and prejudiced men make the most absurd blunders. But that free-thinkers, divers to the bottom of things, fair inquirers, and openers of eyes, should be capable of such a gross mistake is what one would not expect.

18. *Alc.* The rest of mankind we could more easily give up:

[23] [Thucyd. lib. III.]—Author.

but as for the Greeks, men of the most refined genius express a high esteem of them; not only on account of those qualities which you think fit to allow them, but also for their virtues.

Cri. I shall not take upon me to say how far some men may be prejudiced against their country, or whether others may not be prejudiced in favour of it. But, upon the fullest and most equal observation that I am able to make, it is my opinion that, if by virtue is meant truth, justice, gratitude, there is incomparably more virtue now at this day in England than at any time could be found in ancient Greece. Thus much will be allowed—that we know few countries, if any, where men of eminent worth, and famous for deserving well of the public, met with harder fate, and were more ungratefully treated than in the most polite and learned of the Grecian states[24]. Though Socrates, it must be owned, would not allow that those statesmen, by adorning the city, augmenting the fleet, or extending the commerce of Athens, deserved well of their country; or could with justice complain of the ungrateful returns made by their fellow-citizens, whom, while they were in power, they had taken no care to make better men, by improving and cultivating their minds with the principles of virtue, which if they had done, they needed not to have feared their ingratitude. If I were to declare my opinion, what gave the chief advantage to Greeks and Romans and other nations which have made the greatest figure in the world, I should be apt to think it was a peculiar reverence for their respective laws and institutions, which inspired them with steadiness and courage, and that hearty generous love of their country: by which they did not merely understand a certain language or tribe of men, much less a particular spot of earth, but included a certain system of manners, customs, notions, rites, and laws, civil and religious.

Alc. Oh! I perceive your drift: you would have us reverence the laws and religious institutions of our country. But herein we beg to be excused, if we do not think fit to imitate the Greeks, or to be governed by any authority whatsoever.

[[25] *Cri.* So far from it. If Mahometanism were established by authority, I make no doubt those very free-thinkers, who at present

[24] Cicero, *De Repub.* I. 3.
[25] Added in second edition, and afterwards omitted.

applaud Turkish maxims and manners to that degree you would think them ready to turn Turks, would then be the first to exclaim against them.]

Alc. But to return: as for wars and factions, I grant they ever were, and ever will be in the world, upon some pretext or other, as long as men are men.

19. But there is a sort of war and warriors peculiar to Christendom which the heathens had no notion of: I mean disputes in theology, and polemical divines, which the world hath been wonderfully pestered with: these teachers of peace, meekness, concord, and what not! if you take their word for it: but, if you cast an eye upon their practice, you find them to have been in all ages the most contentious, quarrelsome, disagreeing crew, that ever appeared upon earth. To observe the skill and sophistry, the zeal and eagerness, with which those barbarians, the school-divines, split hairs and contest about chimeras, gives me more indignation, as being more absurd and a greater scandal to human reason, than all the ambitious intrigues, cabals, and politics of the court of Rome.

Cri. If divines are quarrelsome, that is not so far forth as divine, but as undivine and unchristian. Justice is a good thing; and the art of healing is excellent; nevertheless, in the administering of justice or physic, men may be wronged or poisoned. But as wrong cannot be justice, or the effect of justice, so poison cannot be medicine, or the effect of medicine; so neither can pride or strife be religion, or the effect of religion. Having premised this, I acknowledge you may often see hot-headed bigots engage themselves in religious as well as civil parties, without being of credit or service to either. And as for the Schoolmen in particular, I do not in the least think the Christian religion concerned in the defence of them, their tenets, or their method of handling them: but, whatever futility there may be in their notions, or inelegancy in their language, in pure justice to truth one must own—they neither banter nor rail nor declaim in their writings, and are so far from shewing fury or passion that perhaps an impartial judge will think the minute philosophers are by no means to be compared with them, for keeping close to the point, or for temper and good manners. But, after all, if men are

puzzled, wrangle, talk nonsense, and quarrel about religion, so they do about law, physic, politics, and everything else of moment. I ask whether, in these professions, or in any other where men have refined and abstracted, they do not run into disputes, chicane, nonsense, and contradictions, as well as in divinity? And yet this doth not hinder but there may be many excellent rules, and just notions, and useful truths, in all those professions. In all disputes human passions too often mix themselves, in proportion as the subject is conceived to be more or less important. But we ought not to confound the cause of man with the cause of God, or make human follies an objection to Divine truths. It is easy to distinguish what looks like wisdom from above, and what proceeds from the passion and weakness of men. This is so clear a point, that one would be tempted to think the not doing it was an effect, not of ignorance, but of something worse.

20. The conduct we object to minute philosophers is a natural consequence of their principles. Whatsoever they can reproach us with is an effect, not of our principles, but of human passion and frailty[26].

Alc. This is admirable. So we must no longer object to Christians the absurd contentions of Councils, the cruelty of Inquisitions, the ambition and usurpation of churchmen[27]?

Cri. You may object them to Christians, but not to Christianity. If the Divine Author of our religion and His disciples have sowed a good seed; and, together with this good seed, the enemies of His gospel (among whom are to be reckoned the minute philosophers of all ages) have sowed bad seeds, whence spring tares and thistles; is it not evident, these bad weeds cannot be imputed to the good seed, or to those who sowed it? Whatever you do or can object against ecclesiastical tyranny, usurpation, or sophistry, may, without any blemish or disadvantage to religion, be acknowledged by all true Christians; provided still that you impute those wicked effects to their true cause, not blaming any principles or persons for them but those that really produce or justify them. Certainly, as the interests of Christianity are not to be supported by unchristian methods, whenever these are made use of, it must be

[26] Cf. sect. 6, 15.

[27] Cf. Dial. I. sect. 3.

supposed there is some other latent principle which sets them at work. If the very court of Rome hath been known, from motives of policy, to oppose settling the Inquisition in a kingdom where the secular power hath endeavoured to introduce it in spite of that court[28]; we may well suppose that, elsewhere, factions of state and political views of princes have given birth to transactions seemingly religious, wherein at bottom neither religion, nor church, nor churchmen, were at all considered. As no man of common sense and honesty will engage in a general defence of ecclesiastics, so I think no man of common candour can condemn them in general. Would you think it reasonable to blame all statesmen, lawyers, or soldiers for the faults committed by those of their profession; though in other times, or in other countries, and influenced by other maxims and other discipline? And if not, why do you measure with one rule to the clergy, and another to the laity? Surely the best reason that can be given for this is prejudice. Should any man rake together all the mischiefs that have been committed in all ages and nations by soldiers and lawyers, you would, I suppose, conclude from thence, not that the state should be deprived of those useful professions, but only that their exorbitances should be guarded against and punished. If you took the same equitable course with the clergy, there would indeed be less to be said against you; but then you would have much less to say. This plain obvious consideration, if every one who read considered, would lessen the credit of your declaimers.

Alc. But when all is said that can be said, it must move a man's indignation to see reasonable creatures, under the notion of study and learning, employed in reading and writing so many voluminous tracts *de land caprind.*

Cri. I shall not undertake the vindication of theological writings, a general defence being as needless as a general charge is groundless. Only let them speak for themselves; and let no man condemn them upon the word of a minute philosopher. But we will imagine the very worst, and suppose a wrangling pedant in divinity disputes, and ruminates, and writes upon a refined point, as useless and unintelligible as you please. Suppose this same person bred a laymen, might he not have employed himself in

[28] [P. Paolo, *Istoria dell' Inquisitione*, p. 42.]—AUTHOR.

tricking bargains, vexatious law-suits, factions, seditions, and such like amusements, with much more prejudice to the public? Suffer then curious wits to spin cobwebs: where is the hurt?

Alc. The mischief is, what men want in light they commonly make up in heat: zeal and ill-nature, being weapons constantly exerted by the partisans, as well as champions, on either side; and those perhaps not mean pedants or book-worms. You shall often see even the learned and eminent divine lay himself out in explaining things inexplicable, or contend for a barren point of theory, as if his life, liberty, or fortune were at stake.

Cri. No doubt all points in divinity are not of equal moment. Some may be too finely spun, and others have more stress laid on them than they deserve. Be the subject what it will, you shall often observe that a point, by being controverted, singled out, examined, and nearly inspected, groweth considerable to the same eye that, perhaps, would have overlooked it in a large and comprehensive view. Nor is it an uncommon thing to behold ignorance and zeal united in men who are born with a spirit of party, though the church or religion have in truth but small share in it. Nothing is easier than to make a *caricatura* (as the painters call it) of any profession upon earth: but, at bottom, there will be found nothing so strange in all this charge upon the clergy, as the partiality of those who censure them, in supposing the common defects of mankind peculiar to their order, or the effect of religious principles.

Alc. Other folks may dispute or squabble as they please, and nobody mind them; but, it seems, these venerable squabbles of the clergy pass for learning, and interest mankind. To use the words of the most ingenious Characterizer of our times:—'A ring is made, and readers gather in abundance. Every one *takes party* and encourages his own side. "This shall be my champion!—This man for my money!—Well hit, on our side!—Again, a good stroke!—There he was even with him!—Have at him the next bout!—Excellent sport[29]!"'

Cri. Methinks I trace the man of quality and breeding in this delicate satire, which so politely ridicules those arguments, answers, defences, and replications which the press groans under.

[29] [*Characteristics*, vol. III. c. 2.]—AUTHOR.

Alc. To the infinite waste of time and paper, and all the while nobody is one whit the wiser. And who indeed can be the wiser for reading books upon subjects quite out of the way, incomprehensible, and most wretchedly written? What man of sense or breeding would not abhor the infection of prolix pulpit eloquence; or of that dry, formal, pedantic, stiff, and clumsy style, which smells of the lamp and the college?

21. They who have the weakness to reverence the universities as seats of learning must needs think this a strange reproach; but it is a very just one. For the most ingenious men are now agreed, that they are only the nurseries of prejudice, corruption, barbarism, and pedantry.

Lys. For my part, I find no fault with universities. All I know is that I had the spending of three hundred pounds a year in one of them, and think it the cheerfullest time of my life. As for their books and style, I had not leisure to mind them.

Cri. Whoever hath a mind to weed will never want work; and he that shall pick out bad books on every subject will soon fill his library. I do not know what theological writings Alciphron and his friends may be conversant in; but, I will venture to say, one may find among our English divines many writers who, for compass of learning, weight of matter, strength of argument, and purity of style are not inferior to any in our language. It is not my design to apologize for the universities: whatever is amiss in them (and what is there perfect among men?) I heartily wish amended. But I dare affirm, because I know it to be true, that any impartial observer, although they should not come up to what in theory he might wish or imagine, will nevertheless find them much superior to those that in fact are to be found in other countries, and far beyond the mean picture that is drawn of them by minute philosophers. It is natural for those to rail most at places of education who have profited least by them. Weak and fond parents will also readily impute to a wrong cause those corruptions themselves have occasioned, by allowing their children more money than they know how to spend innocently. And too often a gentleman who has been idle at the college, and kept idle company, will judge of a whole university from his own cabal.

Alc. Crito mistakes the point. I vouch the authority, not of a

dunce, or a rake, or absurd parent, but of the most consummate critic this age has produced. This great man characterizeth men of the church and universities with the finest touches and most masterly pencil. What do you think he calls them?

Euph. What?

Alc. Why, the black tribe, magicians, formalists, pedants, bearded boys[30]; and having sufficiently derided and exploded them, and their mean, ungenteel learning, he sets most admirable models of his own for good writing: and it must be acknowledged they are the finest things in our language; as I could easily convince you, for I am never without something of that noble writer about me.

Euph. He is then a noble writer?

Alc. I tell you he is a nobleman.

Euph. But a nobleman who writes is one thing, and a noble writer another.

Alc. Both characters are coincident, as you may see.

22. Upon which Alciphron pulled a treatise out of his pocket, entitled *A Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author.* Would you behold, said he, looking round upon the company, a noble specimen of fine writing? do but dip into this book: which Crito opening, read verbatim as follows[31]:—

> 'Where then are the pleasures which ambition promises,
> And love affords? How 's the gay world enjoy'd?
> Or are those to be esteem'd no pleasures
> Which are lost by dulness and inaction?
> But indolence is the highest pleasure.
> To live, and not to feel! To feel no trouble.
> What good then? Life itself. And is
> This properly to live? Is sleeping, life?
> Is this what I should study to prolong?
> Here the
> Fantastic tribe itself seems scandalized.
> A civil war begins: the major part
> Of the capricious dames do range themselves
> On reason's side,
> And declare against the languid Siren.
> Ambition blushes at the offered sweet.
> Conceit and Vanity take superior airs.

[30] See *Characteristics*, vol. I. pp. 64, 333—335.

[31] [Part III. sect. 2.]—AUTHOR. See *Characteristics*, vol. I. pp. 318—320. The *Soliloquy* appeared in 1710.

Ev'n Luxury herself, in her polite
And elegant humour, reproves th' apostate
Sister,
And marks her as an alien to true pleasure.
Away, thou
Drowsy phantom! haunt me no more; for I
Have learn'd from better than thy sisterhood,
That life and happiness consist in action
And employment.

But here a busy form solicits us—
Active, industrious, watchful, and despising
Pains and labour. She wears the serious
Countenance of Virtue, but with features
Of anxiety and disquiet.
What is 't she mutters? What looks she on with
Such admiration and astonishment?
Bags! coffers! heaps of shining metal! What!
For the service of Luxury? For her
These preparations? Art thou then her friend,
Grave Fancy? Is it for her thou toilest?
No, but for provision against want.
But, luxury apart, tell me now,
Hast thou not already a competence?
'Tis good to be secure against the fear
Of starving. Is there then no death but this?
No other passage out of life? Are other doors
Secured if this be barr'd? Say, Avarice!
Thou emptiest of phantoms, is it not vile
Cowardice thou serv'st? What further have I then
To do with thee (thou doubly vile dependent)
When once I have dismiss'd thy patroness,
And despised her threats?

Thus I contend with Fancy and Opinion.'

Euphranor having heard thus far, cried out, What! will you ıever have done with your poetry? another time may serve: but vhy should we break off our conference to read a play?

You are mistaken, it is no play nor poetry, replied Alciphron, ut a famous modern critic moralizing in prose. You must know his great man hath (to use his own words) revealed a ***grand rcanum*** to the world, having instructed mankind in what he calls ***irror-writing***, ***self-discoursing practice***, and ***author practice***, and ıewed [32], that 'by virtue of an intimate recess we may discover a

[32] See *Characteristics*, vol. I. p. 169; also pp. 171, 195, 199, 205.

certain duplicity of soul, and divide our *self* into two parties,' or (as he varies the phrase) 'practically form the dual number.' In consequence whereof, he hath found out that a man may argue with himself; and not only with himself, but also with notions, sentiments, and vices, which by a marvellous prosopopœia he converts into so many ladies; and so converted, he confutes and confounds them in a Divine strain. Can anything be finer, bolder, or more sublime?

Euph. It is very wonderful. I thought, indeed, you had been reading a piece of tragedy. Is this he who despiseth our universities, and sets up for reforming the style and tastes of the age?

Alc. The very same. This is the admired critic of our times. Nothing can stand the test of his correct judgment, which is equally severe to poets and parsons. 'The British Muses (saith this great man[33]) lisp as in their cradles; and their stammering tongues, which nothing but youth and rawness can excuse, have hitherto spoken in wretched pun and quibble. Our dramatic Shakespear, our Fletcher, Jonson, and our epic Milton, preserve this style.' And, according to him, even our later authors, 'aiming at a false sublime, entertain our raw fancy and unpractised ear; which has not yet had leisure to form itself, and become truly musical.'

Euph. Pray what effect may the lessons of this great man, in whose eyes our learned professors are but bearded boys[34], and our most celebrated wits but wretched punsters, have had upon the public? Hath he rubbed off the college rust, cured the rudeness and rawness of our authors, and reduced them to his own attic standard? Do they aspire to his true sublime, or imitate his chaste unaffected style?

Alc. Doubtless the taste of the age is much mended: in proof whereof his writings are universally admired. When our author published this Treatise, he foresaw the public taste would improve apace; that arts and letters would grow to great perfection; that there would be a happy birth of genius: of all which things he spoke, as he saith himself, in a prophetic style.

Cri. And yet, notwithstanding the prophetical predictions of this critic, I do not find any science hath throve among us of late

[33] *Characteristics*, vol. I. p. 217. [34] Cf. sect. 21.

so much as the minute philosophy. In this kind, it must be confessed, we have had many notable productions. But whether they are such masterpieces for good writing, I leave to be determined by their readers.

23. In the meantime, I must beg to be excused if I cannot believe your great man on his bare word; when he would have us think that ignorance and ill-taste are owing to the Christian religion or the clergy, it being my sincere opinion that whatever learning or knowledge we have among us is derived from that order. If those who are so sagacious at discovering a mote in other eyes would but purge their own, I believe they might easily see this truth. For, what but religion could kindle and preserve a spirit towards learning in such a northern rough people[35]? Greece produced men of active and subtile genius. The public conventions and emulations of their cities forwarded that genius; and their natural curiosity was amused and excited by learned conversation, in their public walks and gardens and porticos. Our genius leads to amusements of a grosser kind: we breathe a grosser and a colder air[35]; and that curiosity which was general in Athenians, and the gratifying of which was their chief recreation, is among our people of fashion treated like affectation, and as such banished from polite assemblies and places of resort; and without doubt would in a little time be banished the country, if it were not for the great reservoirs of learning, where those formalists, pedants, and bearded boys, as your profound critic calls them[36], are maintained by the liberality and piety of our predecessors. For, it is as evident that religion was the cause of those seminaries as it is that they are the cause or source of all the learning and taste which are to be found, even in those very men who are the declared enemies of our religion and public foundations. Every one, who knows anything, knows we are indebted for our learning to the Greek and Latin tongues. This those severe censors will readily grant. Perhaps they may not be so ready to grant, what all men must see, that we are indebted for those tongues to our religion. What else could have made foreign and dead languages in such request among us? What could have kept in being and handed them down to our times,

[35] Cf. sect. 11, 14; also Dial. II. 17, III. 12. [36] Cf. sect. 21.

through so many dark ages in which the world was wasted and disfigured by wars and violence? What, but a regard to the Holy Scriptures, and theological writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church? And in fact, do we not find that the learning of those times was solely in the hands of Ecclesiastics; that they alone lighted the lamp in succession one from another, and transmitted it down to after ages; and that ancient books were collected and preserved in their colleges and seminaries, when all love and remembrance of polite arts and studies was extinguished among the laity, whose ambition entirely turned to arms?

24. *Alc.* There is, I must needs say, one sort of learning undoubtedly of Christian original, and peculiar to the universities; where our youth spend several years in acquiring that mysterious jargon of Scholasticism; than which there could never have been contrived a more effectual method to perplex and confound human understanding. It is true, gentlemen are untaught by the world what they have been taught at the college: but then their time is doubly lost.

Cri. But what if this scholastic learning was not of Christian but of Mahometan original, being derived from the Arabs? And what if this grievance of gentlemen's spending several years in learning and unlearning this jargon be all grimace, and a specimen only of the truth and candour of certain minute philosophers, who raise great invectives from slight occasions, and judge too often without inquiring? Surely it would be no such deplorable loss of time, if a young gentleman spent a few months upon that so much despised and decried art of Logic, a surfeit of which is by no means the prevailing nuisance of this age. It is one thing to waste one's time in learning and unlearning the barbarous terms, wire-drawn distinctions, and prolix sophistry of the Schoolmen; and another to attain some exactness in defining and arguing—things perhaps not altogether beneath the dignity even of a minute philosopher. There was indeed a time when Logic was considered as its own object: and that art of reasoning, instead of being transferred to things, turned altogether upon words and abstractions; which produced a sort of leprosy in all parts of knowledge, corrupting and converting them into

hollow verbal disputations in a most impure dialect. But those times are past; and that, which had been cultivated as the principal learning for some ages, is now considered in another light; and by no means makes that figure in the universities, or bears that part in the studies of young gentlemen educated there, which is pretended by those admirable reformers of religion and learning, the minute philosophers.

25. But who were they that encouraged and produced the restoration of arts and polite learning? What share had the minute philosophers in this affair? Matthias Corvinus king of Hungary, Alphonsus king of Naples, Cosmus de Medicis, Picus of Mirandula, and other princes, and great men, famous for learning themselves, and for encouraging it in others with a munificent liberality, were neither Turks, nor Gentiles, nor minute philosophers. Who was it that transplanted and revived the Greek language and authors, and with them all polite arts and literature, in the west? Was it not chiefly Bessarion a cardinal, Marcus Musurus an archbishop, Theodore Gaza a private clergyman? Has there been a greater and more renowned patron and restorer of elegant studies in every kind, since the days of Augustus Cæsar, than Leo the Tenth, pope of Rome? Did any writers approach the purity of the classics nearer than the cardinals Bembus and Sadoletus, or than the bishops of Jovius and Vida? Not to mention an endless number of ingenious Ecclesiastics, who flourished on the other side of the Alps in the golden age (as the Italians call it) of Leo the Tenth, and wrote, both in their own language and the Latin, after the best models of antiquity. It is true, this first recovery of learning preceded the Reformation, and lighted the way to it; but the religious controversies which ensued did wonderfully propagate and improve it in all parts of Christendom. And surely, the Church of England is at least as well calculated for the encouragement of learning as that of Rome. Experience confirms this observation; and I believe the minute philosophers will not be so partial to Rome as to deny it.

Alc. It is impossible your account of learning beyond the Alps should be true. The noble critic in my hands, having complimented the French, to whom he allows some good authors, asserts[37]

[37] *Characteristics*, vol. I. p. 35, note.

of other foreigners, particularly the Italians, 'That they may be reckoned no better than the corrupters of true learning and erudition.'

Cri. With some sorts of critics, dogmatical censures and conclusions are not always the result of perfect knowledge or exact inquiry; and if they harangue upon taste, truth of art, a just piece, grace of style, attic elegance, and such topics, they are to be understood only as those that would fain talk themselves into reputation for courage. To hear Thrasymachus speak of resentment, duels, and point of honour, one would think him ready to burst with valour.

Lys. Whatever merit this writer may have as a demolisher, I always thought he had very little as a builder. It is natural for careless writers to run into faults they never think of; but for an exact and severe critic to shoot his bolt at random is unpardonable. If he, who professes at every turn a high esteem for polite writing, should yet despise those who most excel in it; one would be tempted to suspect his taste. But if the very man who of all men talks most about art, and taste, and critical skill, and would be thought to have most considered those points, should often deviate from his own rules, into the false sublime, or the *mauvaise plaisanterie*—what reasonable man would follow the taste and judgment of such a guide, or be seduced, or climb the steep ascent, or tread in the rugged paths of virtue on his recommendation?

26. *Alc.* But to return: methinks Crito makes no compliment to the genius of his country, in supposing that Englishmen might not have wrought out of themselves all art and science and good taste; without being beholden to church or universities, or ancient languages.

Cri. What might have been is only conjecture. What has been it is not difficult to know. That there is a vein in Britain, of as rich an ore as ever was in any country, I will not deny; but it lies deep, and will cost pains to come at: and extraordinary pains require an extraordinary motive. As for what lies next the surface, it seems but indifferent, being neither so good nor in such plenty as in some other countries. It was the comparison of an ingenious Florentine, that the celebrated poems of Tasso and Ariosto are like two gardens, the one of cucumbers, the other of

melons. In the one you shall find few bad, but the best are not a very good fruit; in the other much the greater part are good for nothing, but those that are good are excellent. Perhaps the same comparison may hold, between the English and some of their neighbours.

Alc. But suppose we should grant that the Christian religion and its seminaries might have been of use, in preserving or retrieving polite arts and letters; what then? Will you make this an argument of its truth?

Cri. I will make it an argument of prejudice and ingratitude in those minute philosophers, who object darkness, ignorance, and rudeness as an effect of that very thing which above all others hath enlightened and civilized and embellished their country; which is as truly indebted to it for arts and sciences (which nothing but religion was ever known to have planted in such a latitude) as for that general sense of virtue and humanity, and belief of a Providence and future state, which all the argumentation of minute philosophers hath not yet been able to abolish.

27. *Alc.* It is strange you should still persist to argue as if all the gentlemen of our sect were enemies to virtue, and downright atheists; though I have assured you of the contrary, and that we have among us several who profess themselves in the interests of virtue and natural religion, and have also declared that I myself do now argue upon that foot.

Cri. How can you pretend to be in the interests of natural religion, and yet be professed enemies of the Christian; the only established religion which includes whatever is excellent in the natural, and which is the only means of making those precepts, duties, and notions, so called, become reverenced throughout the world? Would not he be thought weak or insincere, who should go about to persuade people that he was much in the interests of an earthly monarch; that he loved and admired his government; when at the same time he shewed himself, on all occasions, a most bitter enemy of those very persons and methods which above all others contributed most to his service, and to make his dignity known and revered, his laws observed, or his dominion extended? And is not this what minute philosophers do, while they set up for advocates of God and religion, and yet do all they can to

discredit Christians and their worship? It must be owned, indeed, that you argue against Christianity, as the cause of evil and wickedness in the world; but with such arguments and in such a manner as might equally prove the same thing of civil government, of meat and drink, of every faculty and profession, of learning, of eloquence, and even of human reason itself. After all, even those of your sect who allow themselves to be called Deists, if their notions are thoroughly examined, will I fear be found to include little of religion in them[38]. As for the Providence of God watching over the conduct of human agents, and dispensing blessings or chastisements, the immortality of the soul, a final judgment, and future state of rewards and punishments; how few, if any, of your free-thinkers have made it their endeavour to possess men's minds with a serious sense of those great points of natural religion! How many, on the contrary, endeavour to render the belief of them doubtful or ridiculous! [[39]It must be owned there may be found men that, without any regard to these points, make some pretence to religion: but who shall think them in earnest? You shall sometimes see the very ringleaders of vice and profaneness write like men that would be thought to have virtue and piety at heart. This may, perhaps, prove them inconsistent writers, but can never prove them to be innocent. When a man's declared principles and peculiar tenets are utterly subversive of these things, whatever such an one saith of virtue, piety, and religion will be understood as mere deception, and compliance with common forms.]

Lys. To speak the truth, I, for my part, had never any liking to religion of any kind, either revealed or unrevealed; and I dare venture to say the same for those gentlemen of our sect that I am acquainted with, having never observed them guilty of so much meanness as even to mention the name of God with reverence, or to speak with the least regard of piety or any sort of worship. There may perhaps be found one or two formal pretenders to enthusiasm and devotion, in the way of natural religion, who laughed at Christians for publishing hymns and meditations, while they plagued the world with as bad of their own; but the sprightly men made a jest of all this. It seems to us mere pedantry. Some-

[38] Cf. *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, sect. 2—6.
[39] Added in second edition, and afterwards omitted.

times, indeed, in good company one may hear a word dropped in commendation of honour and good-nature; but the former of these, by *connoisseurs*, is always understood to mean nothing but fashion; as the latter is nothing but temper and constitution, which guides a man just as appetite doth a brute.

28. And after all these arguments and notions, which beget one another without end, to take the matter short; neither I nor my friends for our souls could ever comprehend, why man might not do very well and govern himself without any religion at all, as well as a brute, which is thought the sillier creature of the two. Have brutes instincts, senses, appetites, and passions, to steer and conduct them? So have men, and reason over and above to consult upon occasion. From these premises, we conclude the road of human life is sufficiently lighted without religion.

Cri. Brutes having but small power, limited to things present or particular, are sufficiently opposed and kept in order by the force or faculties of other animals and the skill of man, without conscience or religion: but conscience is a necessary balance to human reason, a faculty of such mighty extent and power, especially towards mischief. Besides, other animals are, by the law of their nature, determined to one certain end or kind of being, without inclination or means either to deviate or go beyond it. But man hath in him a will and higher principle; by virtue whereof he may pursue different or even contrary ends; and either fall short of or exceed the perfection natural to his species in this world; as he is capable, either by giving up the reins to his sensual appetites, of degrading himself into the condition of brutes, or else by well ordering and improving his mind, of being transformed into the similitude of angels. Man alone of all animals hath understanding to know his God. What availeth this knowledge unless it be to ennoble man, and raise him to an imitation and participation of the Divinity? Or what could such ennoblement avail if to end with this life? Or how can these things take effect without religion? But the points of vice and virtue, man and beast, sense and intellect, have been already at large canvassed. What! Lysicles, would you have us go back where we were three or four days ago?

Lys. By no means: I had much rather go forward, and make an

end as soon as possible. But, to save trouble, give me leave to tell you once for all that, say what you can, you shall never persuade me so many ingenious agreeable men are in the wrong, and a pack of snarling sour bigots in the right.

29. *Cri.* O Lysicles! I neither look for religion among bigots, nor reason among libertines; each kind disgrace their several pretensions; the one owing no regard even to the plainest and most important truths, while the others exert an angry zeal for points of least concern. And surely whatever there is of silly, narrow, and uncharitable in the bigot, the same is in great measure to be imputed to the conceited ignorance and petulant profaneness of the libertine. And it is not at all unlikely that, as libertines make bigots, so bigots should make libertines, the extreme of one party being ever observed to produce a contrary extreme of another. And although, while these adversaries draw the rope of contention, reason and religion are often called upon, yet are they perhaps very little considered or concerned in the contest.

Lysicles, instead of answering Crito, turned short upon Alciphron. It was always my opinion, said he, that nothing could be sillier than to think of destroying Christianity, by crying up natural religion. Whoever thinks highly of the one can never, with a consistency, think meanly of the other; it being very evident that natural religion, without revealed, never was and never can be established or received anywhere, but in the brains of a few idle speculative men. I was aware what your concessions would come to. The belief of a God, virtue, a future state, and such fine notions are, as every one may see with half an eye, the very basis and corner-stone of the Christian religion. Lay but this foundation for them to build on, and you shall soon see what superstructures our men of divinity will raise from it. The truth and importance of those points once admitted, a man need be no conjuror to prove, upon that principle, the excellency and usefulness of the Christian religion. And then to be sure, there must be priests to teach and propagate this useful religion. And if priests, a regular subordination without doubt in this worthy society, and a provision for their maintenance, such as may enable them to perform all their rites and ceremonies with decency, and keep their sacred character above contempt. And the plain consequence

of all this is a confederacy between the prince and the priesthood to subdue the people;—so we have let in at once upon us, a long train of ecclesiastical evils, priestcraft, hierarchy, inquisition. We have lost our liberty and property, and put the nation to vast expense, only to purchase bridles and saddles for their own backs.

30. This being spoke with some sharpness of tone, and an upbraiding air, touched Alphicron to the quick, who replied nothing, but showed confusion in his looks.

Crito smiling looked at Euphranor and me, then, casting an eye on the two philosophers, spoke as follows:—If I may be admitted to interpose good offices for preventing a rupture between old friends and brethren in opinion, I would observe that in this charge of Lysicles there is something right and something wrong. It seems right to assert, as he doth, that the real belief of natural religion will lead a man to approve of revealed; but it is as wrong to assert that Inquisitions, tyranny, and ruin must follow from thence. Your free-thinkers, without offence be it said, seem to mistake their talent. They imagine strongly, but reason weakly; mighty at exaggeration, and jejune in argument! Can no method be found to relieve them from the terror of that fierce and bloody animal an English parson? Will it not suffice to pare his talons without chopping off his fingers? Then they are such wonderful patriots for liberty and property! When I hear these two words in the mouth of a minute philosopher, I am put in mind of the *Teste di Ferro* at Rome. His Holiness, it seems, not having power to assign pensions on Spanish benefices to any but natives of Spain, always keeps at Rome two Spaniards, called *Teste di Ferro*, who have the name of all such pensions, but not the profit, which goes to Italians. As we may see every day both things and notions placed to the account of liberty and property which in reality neither have nor are meant to have any share in them. What! Is it impossible for a man to be a Christian but he must be a slave; or a clergyman but he must have the principles of an inquisitor? I am far from screening and justifying an appetite of domination or tyrannical power in ecclesiastics. Some, who have been guilty in that respect, have sorely paid for it, and it is to be hoped they always will. But, having laid the fury and folly of the

Lys. I believe not. It grieves me to see so many overgrown estates in the hands of ancient families, on account of no other merit but what they brought with them into the world.

Euph. May you not then as well take their lands too, and bestow them on minute philosophers, as persons of more merit?

Lys. So much the better. This enlarges our view and opens a new scene: it is very delightful, in the contemplation of truth, to behold how one theory grows out of another.

Alc. Old Pætus used to say that if the clergy were deprived of their hire we should lose the most popular argument against them.

Lys. But, so long as men live by religion, there will never be wanting teachers and writers in defence of it.

Cri. And how can you be sure they would be wanting though they did not live by it; since it is well known Christianity had its defenders even when men died by it?

Lys. One thing I know: there is a rare nursery of young plants growing up, who have been carefully guarded against every air of prejudice, and sprinkled with the dew of our choicest principles: meanwhile, wishes are wearisome; and to our infinite regret nothing can be done, so long as there remains any prejudice in favour of old customs and laws and national constitutions, which, at bottom, we very well know and can demonstrate to be only words and notions.

32. But I can never hope, Crito, to make you think my schemes reasonable. We reason each right upon his own principles, and shall never agree till we quit our principles, which cannot be done by reasoning. We all talk of just, and right, and wrong, and public good, and all those things. The names may be the same, but the notions and conclusions very different, perhaps diametrically opposite; and yet each may admit of clear proofs, and be inferred by the same way of reasoning. For instance, the gentlemen of the club which I frequent define man to be a social animal: consequently, we exclude from this definition all those human creatures of whom it may be said, we would rather have their room than their company. And such, though wearing the shape of man, are to be esteemed, in all account of reason, not as *men*, but only as *human creatures*. Hence it plainly follows that men of pleasure, men of humour, and men of wit are alone pro-

perly and truly to be considered as men. Whatever, therefore, conduceth to the emolument of such is for the good of mankind, and consequently very just and lawful, although seeming to be attended with loss or damage to other creatures: inasmuch as no real injury can be done in life or property to those who know not how to enjoy them. This we hold for clear and well-connected reasoning. But others may view things in another light, assign different definitions, draw other inferences, and perhaps consider what we suppose the very top and flower of the creation only as a wart or excrescence of human nature. From all which there must ensue a very different system of morals, politics, rights, and notions.

Cri. If you have a mind to argue we will argue; if you have more mind to jest, we will laugh with you.

Lys.

——— Ridentem dicere verum
Quid vetat?

This partition of our kind into men and human creatures, puts me in mind of another notion, broached by one of our club, whom we used to call the Pythagorean.

33. He made a threefold partition of the human species, into birds, beasts, and fishes, being of opinion that the road of life lies upwards, in a perpetual ascent through the scale of being: in such sort that the souls of insects after death make their second appearance in the shape of perfect animals, birds, beasts, or fishes; which upon their death are preferred into human bodies; and in the next stage into beings of a higher and more perfect kind. This man we considered at first as a sort of heretic—because his scheme seemed not to consist with our fundamental tenet, the mortality of the soul: but he justified the notion to be innocent, inasmuch as it included nothing of reward or punishment, and was not proved by any argument which supposed or implied either incorporeal spirit or Providence, being only inferred, by way of analogy, from what he had observed in human affairs, the court, the church, and the army; wherein the tendency is always upwards from lower posts to higher. According to this system, the fishes are those men who swim in pleasure, such as *petits maitres*, *bons vivans*, and honest fellows. The beasts are dry, drudging, covetous,

rapacious folk, and all those addicted to care and business, like oxen, and other dry-land animals, which spend their lives in labour and fatigue. The birds are airy notional men, enthusiasts, projectors, philosophers, and such-like: in each species every individual retaining a tincture of his former state, which constitutes what is called genius. If you ask me which species of human creatures I like best, I answer, the flying fish: that is, a man of animal enjoyment with a mixture of whim. Thus you see we have our creeds and our systems, as well as graver folks; with this difference, that they are not strait-laced but sit easy, to be slipped off or on, as humour or occasion serves. And now I can, with the greatest equanimity imaginable, hear my opinions argued against, or confuted.

34. *Alc.* It were to be wished all men were of that mind. But you should find a sort of men, whom I need not name, that cannot bear with the least temper to have their opinions examined or their faults censured. They are against reason, because reason is against them. For our parts we are all for liberty of conscience. If our tenets are absurd, we allow them to be freely argued and inspected; and by parity of reason we might hope to be allowed the same privilege with respect to the opinions of other men.

Cri. O Alciphron! wares that will not bear the light are justly to be suspected. Whatever therefore moves you to make this complaint, take my word I never will: but as hitherto I have allowed your reason its full scope, so for the future I always shall. And though I cannot approve of railling or declaiming, not even in myself, whenever you have shewed me the way to it: yet this I will answer for, that you shall ever be allowed to reason as closely and as strenuously as you can. But, for the love of truth, be candid, and do not spend your strength and our time in points of no significancy, or foreign to the purpose, or agreed between us. We allow that tyranny and slavery are bad things: but why should we apprehend them from the clergy at this time? Rites and ceremonies we own are not points of chief moment in religion: but why should we ridicule things in their nature, at least, innocent, and which bear the stamp of supreme authority? That men in divinity, as well as other subjects, are perplexed with useless disputes, and are likely to be so as long as the world lasts, I freely

acknowledge: but why must all the human weakness and mistakes of clergymen be imputed to wicked designs? Why indiscriminately abuse their character and tenets? Is this like candour, love of truth, and free-thinking? It is granted there may be found, now and then, spleen and ill-breeding in the clergy: but are not the same faults incident to English laymen of a retired education and country life? I grant there is infinite futility in the schoolmen: but I deny that a volume of that doth so much mischief, as a page of minute philosophy. That weak or wicked men should, by favour of the world, creep into power and high stations in the church is nothing wonderful: and that in such stations they should behave like themselves is natural to suppose. But all the while it is evident that not the gospel but the world, not the spirit but the flesh, not God but the devil, puts them upon their unworthy achievements. We make no difficulty to grant that nothing is more infamous than vice and ignorance in a clergyman; nothing more base than a hypocrite, more frivolous than a pedant, more cruel than an inquisitor. But it must be also granted by you, gentlemen, that nothing is more ridiculous and absurd than for pedantic, ignorant, and corrupt men to cast the first stone at every shadow of their own defects and vices in other men.

35. *Alc.* When I consider the detestable state of slavery and superstition, I feel my heart dilate and expand itself to grasp that inestimable blessing of independent liberty. This is the sacred and high prerogative, the very life and health of our English constitution. You must not therefore think it strange, if, with a vigilant and curious eye, we guard it against the minutest appearance of evil. You must even suffer us to cut round about, and very deep, and make use of the magnifying glass, the better to view and extirpate every the least speck which shall discover itself in what we are careful and jealous to preserve as the apple of our eye.

Cri. As for unbounded liberty, I leave it to savages, among whom alone I believe it is to be found: but, for the reasonable legal liberty of our constitution, I most heartily and sincerely wish it may for ever subsist and flourish among us. You and all other Englishmen cannot be too vigilant, or too earnest, to preserve this goodly frame, or to curb and disappoint the wicked

ambition of whoever, laymen or ecclesiastic, shall attempt to change our free and gentle government into a slavish or severe one. But what pretext can this afford for your attempts against religion, or indeed how can it be consistent with them? Is not the Protestant religion a main part of our legal constitution? I remember to have heard a foreigner remark, that we of this island were very good Protestants, but no Christians. But whatever minute philosophers may wish, or foreigners say, it is certain our laws speak a different language.

Alc. This puts me in mind of the wise reasoning of a certain sage magistrate, who, being pressed by the raillery and arguments of an ingenious man, had nothing to say for his religion but that ten millions of people inhabiting the same island might, whether right or wrong, if they thought good, establish laws for the worshipping of God in their temples, and appealing to Him in their courts of justice. And that in case ten thousand ingenious men should publicly deride and trample on those laws, it might be just and lawful for the said ten millions to expel the said ten thousand ingenious men out of their said island.

Euph. And pray, what answer would you make to this remark of the sage magistrate?

Alc. The answer is plain. By the law of nature, which is superior to all positive institutions, wit and knowledge have a right to command folly and ignorance. I say, ingenious men have by natural right a dominion over fools.

Euph. What dominion over the laws and people of Great Britain minute philosophers may be entitled to by nature, I shall not dispute, but leave to be considered by the public.

Alc. This doctrine, it must be owned, was never thoroughly understood before our own times. In the last age, Hobbes and his followers, though otherwise very great men, declared for the religion of the magistrate; probably because they were afraid of the magistrate: but times are changed, and the magistrates may now be afraid of us.

Cri. I allow the magistrate may well be afraid of you in one sense, I mean, afraid to trust you. This brings to my thoughts a passage on the trial of Leander for a capital offence. That gentleman having picked out and excluded from his jury, by peremptory exception, all but some men of fashion and pleasure, humbly

moved, when Dorcon was going to kiss the book, that he might be required to declare upon honour whether he believed either God or gospel. Dorcon, rather than hazard his reputation as a man of honour and free-thinker, openly avowed that he believed in neither. Upon which the court declared him unfit to serve on a jury. By the same reason, so many were set aside as made it necessary to put off the trial.

We are very easy, replied Alciphron, about being trusted to serve on juries, if we can be admitted to serve in lucrative employments.

Cri. But what if the government should enjoin that every one, before he was sworn into office, should make the same declaration which Dorcon was required to make?

Alc. God forbid! I hope there is no such design on foot.

Cri. Whatever designs may be on foot, thus much is certain: the Christian reformed religion is a principal part and corner-stone of our free constitution; and I verily think, the only thing that makes us deserving of freedom, or capable of enjoying it. Freedom is either a blessing or a curse as men use it. And to me it seems that if our religion were once destroyed from among us, and those notions which pass for prejudices of a Christian education erased from the minds of Britons, the best thing that could befal us would be the loss of our freedom. Surely a people wherein there is such restless ambition, such high spirits, such animosity of faction, so great interests, in contest such unbounded licence of speech and press, amidst so much wealth and luxury, nothing but those *veteres aviæ*, which you pretend to extirpate, could have hitherto kept from ruin.

36. Under the Christian religion this nation hath been greatly improved. From a sort of savages, we have grown civil, polite, and learned. We have made a decent and noble figure both at home and abroad. And, as our religion decreaseth, I am afraid we shall be found to have declined. Why then should we persist in the dangerous experiment?

Alc. One would think, Crito, you had forgot the many calamities occasioned by churchmen and religion.

Cri. And one would think you had forgot what was answered this very day to that objection. But, not to repeat eternally

the same things, I should observe, in the first place, that, if we reflect on the past state of Christendom, and of our country in particular, with our feuds and factions subsisting while we were all of the same religion, for instance, that of the White and Red Roses, so violent and bloody and of such long continuance; we can have no assurance that those ill humours, which have since shewn themselves under the mask of religion, would not have broke out with some other pretext, if this had been wanting. I observe, in the second place, that it will not follow, from any observations you can make on our history, that the evils, accidentally occasioned by religion, bear any proportion either to the good effects it hath really produced, or the evils it hath prevented. Lastly, I observe that the best things may, by accident, be the occasion of evil; which accidental effect is not, to speak properly and truly, produced by the good thing itself, but by some evil thing, which, being neither part, property, nor effect of it, happens to be joined with it. But I should be ashamed to insist and enlarge on so plain a point. Certainly whatever evils this nation might have formerly sustained from superstition, no man of common sense will say the evils felt or apprehended at present are from that quarter. Priestcraft is not the reigning distemper at this day. And surely it will be owned that a wise man, who takes upon him to be vigilant for the public weal, should touch proper things at proper times, and not prescribe for a surfeit when the distemper is a consumption.

Alc. I think we have sufficiently discussed the subject of this day's conference. And now, let Lysicles take it as he will, I must, in regard to my own character, as a fair and impartial adversary, acknowledge there is something in what Crito hath said, upon the usefulness of the Christian religion. I will even own to you that some of our sect are for allowing it a toleration. I remember, at a meeting of several ingenious men, after much debate we came successively to diverse resolutions. The first was, that no religion ought to be tolerated in the state: but this on more mature thought was judged impracticable. The second was, that all religion should be tolerated, but none countenanced except atheism: but it was apprehended that this might breed contentions among the lower sort of people. We came therefore to conclude, in the third place, that some religion or

other should be established for the use of the vulgar. And, after a long dispute what this religion should be, Lysis, a brisk young man, perceiving no signs of agreement, proposed that the present religion might be tolerated, till a better was found. But, allowing it to be expedient, I can never think it true, so long as there lie unanswerable objections against it, which, if you please, I shall take the liberty to propose at our next meeting.

To which we all agreed.

THE SIXTH DIALOGUE[41].

The balances of deceit are in his hand.—HOSEA xii. 7.

Τὸ Ἐξαπατᾶσθαι αὐτὸν ὑφ' αὑτοῦ, πάντων χαλεπώτατον.—PLATO.

1. Points agreed. 2. Sundry pretences to revelation. 3. Uncertainty of tradition. 4. Object and ground of faith. 5. Some books disputed, others evidently spurious. 6. Style and composition of Holy Scripture. 7. Difficulties occurring therein. 8. Obscurity not always a defect. 9. Inspiration neither impossible nor absurd. 10. Objections from the form and matter of Divine revelation considered. 11. Infidelity an effect of narrowness and prejudice. 12. Articles of Christian faith not unreasonable. 13. Guilt the natural parent of fear. 14. Things unknown reduced to the standard of what men know. 15. Prejudices against the incarnation of the Son of God. 16. Ignorance of the Divine economy a source of difficulties. 17. Wisdom of God foolishness to man. 18. Reason no blind guide. 19. Usefulness of Divine revelation. 20. Prophecies, whence obscure. 21. Eastern accounts of time older than the Mosaic. 22. The humour of Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and other nations, extending their antiquity beyond truth, accounted for. 23. Reasons confirming the Mosaic account. 24. Profane historians inconsistent. 25. Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian. 26. The testimony of Josephus considered. 27. Attestation of Jews and Gentiles to Christianity. 28. Forgeries and heresies. 29. Judgment and attention to minute philosophers. 30. Faith and miracles. 31. Probable arguments, a sufficient ground of faith. 32. The Christian religion able to stand the test of rational inquiry.

1. THE following day being Sunday, our philosophers lay long in bed, while the rest of us went to church in the neighbouring town,

[41] This Dialogue discusses the positive evidence on which faith in the Divinity of Christianity rests, and also objections to that evidence. The argument passes from the social utility of this form of religion to an examination of its truth. That the

where we dined at Euphranor's, and after evening service returned to the two philosophers, whom we found in the library. They told us that, if there was a God, he was present everywhere as well as at church; and that if we had been serving him one way, they did not neglect to do as much another; inasmuch as a free exercise of reason must be allowed the most acceptable service and worship that a rational creature can offer to its Creator. However, said Alciphron, if you, gentlemen, can but solve the difficulties which I shall propose to-morrow morning, I promise to go to church next Sunday.

After some general conversation of this kind, we sat down to a light supper, and the next morning assembled at the same place as the day before; where being all seated, I observed, that the foregoing week our conferences had been carried on for a longer time and with less interruption than I had ever known, or well could be, in town; where men's hours are so broken by visits, business, and amusements, that whoever is content to form his notions from conversation only must needs have them very shattered and imperfect.

And what have we got, replied Alciphron, by all these continued conferences? For my part, I think myself just where I was with respect to the main point that divides us—the truth of the Christian religion.

I answered, that so many points had been examined, discussed, and agreed, between him and his adversaries, that I hoped to see them come to an entire agreement in the end. For, in the first place, said I, the principles and opinions of those who are called free-thinkers, or minute philosophers, have been pretty clearly explained[42]. It hath been also agreed, That vice is not of that benefit to the nation which some men imagine; that virtue is highly useful to mankind[43]: but that the beauty of virtue is not alone sufficient to engage them in the practice

evidence for Christianity is essentially moral or probable, and addressed to faith; not scientific or demonstrative, and addressed to speculative reason, is acknowledged, indeed urged, by Crito, at the close of the discussion.

The progress of historical criticism and scientific research, with the consequent revolution in men's recent conceptions of history and nature, have superseded details in this Dialogue more than in any other of the seven. Nevertheless, it is an ingenious refutation of objections to the truth of Christianity according to the conceptions of the Lockian epoch, and chiefly at that point of view.

[42] Dial. I.

[43] Dial. II.

of it[44]; that therefore the belief of a God and Providence ought to be encouraged in the state, and tolerated in good company, as a useful notion[44]. Further, it hath been proved that there is a God[45]: that it is reasonable to worship Him: and that the worship, faith, and principles prescribed by the Christian religion have a useful tendency[46].

Admit, replied Alciphron, addressing himself to Crito, all that Dion saith to be true: yet this doth not hinder my being just where I was, with respect to the main point. Since there is nothing in all this that proves the *truth* of the Christian religion: though each of those particulars enumerated may, perhaps, prejudice in its favour. I am, therefore, to suspect myself at present for a prejudiced person; prejudiced, I say, in favour of Christianity. This, as I am a lover of truth, puts me upon my guard against deception. I must, therefore, look sharp, and well consider every step I take.

2. *Cri.* You may remember, Alciphron, you proposed, for the subject of our present conference—the consideration of certain difficulties and objections which you had to offer against the Christian religion. We are now ready to hear and consider whatever you shall think fit to produce of that kind. Atheism, and a wrong notion of Christianity, as of something hurtful to mankind, are great prejudices; the removal of which may dispose a man to argue with candour, and submit to reasonable proof: but the removing prejudices against an opinion is not to be reckoned prejudicing in its favour. It may be hoped, therefore, that you will be able to do justice to your cause, without being fond of it.

Alc. O Crito! that man may thank his stars to whom nature hath given a sublime soul, who can raise himself above popular opinions, and, looking down on the herd of mankind, behold them scattered over the surface of the whole earth, divided and subdivided into numberless nations and tribes, differing in notions and tenets, as in language, manners, and dress. The man who takes a general view of the world and its inhabitants from this lofty stand, above the reach of prejudice, seems to breathe a purer air, and to see by a clearer light: but how to impart this clear and

[44] Dial. III. [45] Dial. IV. [46] Dial. V.

extensive view to those who are wandering beneath in the narrow dark paths of error! This indeed is a hard task; yet, hard as it is, I shall try if by any means

Clara tuæ possim præpandere lumina menti.—LUCRET.

Know then that all the various casts or sects of the sons of men have each their faith, and their religious system, germinating and sprouting forth from that common grain of Enthusiasm which is an original ingredient in the composition of human nature. They shall each tell of intercourse with the invisible world, revelations from heaven, divine oracles, and the like. All which pretensions, when I regard with an impartial eye, it is impossible I should assent to all, when I find within myself something that withholds me from assenting to any of them. For, although I may be willing to follow, so far as common sense and the light of nature lead; yet the same reason that bids me yield to rational proof forbids me to admit opinions without proof. This holds in general against all revelations whatsoever.—And be this my first objection against the Christian in particular.

Cri. As this objection supposes there is no proof or reason for believing the Christian revelation, if good reason can be assigned for such belief, it comes to nothing. Now, I presume you will grant the authority of the reporter is a true and proper reason for believing reports: and the better this authority, the juster claim it hath to our assent: but the authority of God is on all accounts the best: whatever therefore comes from God, it is most reasonable to believe.

3. *Alc.* This I grant; but then it must be proved to come from God.

Cri. And are not miracles, and the accomplishments of prophecies, joined with the excellency of its doctrine, a sufficient proof that the Christian religion came from God?

Alc. Miracles, indeed, would prove something. But what proof have we of these miracles?

Cri. Proof of the same kind that we have or can have of any facts done a great way off, and a long time ago. We have authentic accounts transmitted down to us from eye-witnesses, whom we cannot conceive tempted to impose upon us by any human motive

whatsoever; inasmuch as they acted therein contrary to their interests, their prejudices, and the very principles in which they had been nursed and educated. These accounts were confirmed by the unparalleled subversion of the city of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jewish nation, which is a standing testimony to the truth of the gospel, particularly of the predictions of our blessed Saviour. These accounts, within less than a century, were spread throughout the world, and believed by great numbers of people. These same accounts were committed to writing, translated into several languages, and handed down with the same respect and consent of Christians in the most distant churches.

Do you not see, said Alciphron, staring full at Crito, that all this hangs by *tradition?* And tradition, take my word for it, gives but a weak hold: it is a chain, whereof the first links may be stronger than steel, and yet the last weak as wax, and as brittle as glass. Imagine a picture copied successively by a hundred painters, one from another; how like must the last copy be to the original! How lively and distinct will an image be, after a hundred reflections between two parallel mirrors! Thus like and thus lively do I think a faint vanishing tradition, at the end of sixteen or seventeen hundred years. Some men have a false heart, others a wrong head; and, where both are true, the memory may be treacherous. Hence there is still something added, something omitted, and something varied from the truth: and the sum of many such additions, deductions, and alterations accumulated for several ages do, at the foot of the account, make quite another thing.

Cri. Ancient facts we may know by tradition, oral or written: and this latter we may divide into two kinds, private and public, as writings are kept in the hands of particular men, or recorded in public archives. Now, all these three sorts of tradition, for aught I can see, concur to attest the genuine antiquity of the gospels. And they are strengthened by collateral evidence from rites instituted, festivals observed, and monuments erected by ancient Christians, such as churches, baptisteries, and sepulchres. Now, allowing your objection holds against oral tradition, singly taken, yet I can think it no such difficult thing to transcribe faithfully. And things once committed to writing are secure from slips of memory, and may with common care be preserved entire so long as the manuscript lasts: and this experience shews may be above

two thousand years. The Alexandrine manuscript[47] is allowed to be above twelve hundred years old; and it is highly probable there were then extant copies four hundred years old. A tradition, therefore, of above sixteen hundred years old need have only two or three links in its chain. And these links, notwithstanding that great length of time, may be very sound and entire. Since no reasonable man will deny, that an ancient manuscript may be of much the same credit now as when it was first written. We have it on good authority, and it seems probable, that the primitive Christians were careful to transcribe copies of the gospels and epistles for their private use; and that other copies were preserved as public records, in the several churches throughout the world; and that portions thereof were constantly read in their assemblies. Can more be said to prove the writings of classic authors, or ancient records of any kind authentic?

Alciphron, addressing his discourse to Euphranor, said—It is one thing to silence an adversary, and another to convince him. What do you think, Euphranor?

Euph. Doubtless, it is.

Alc. But what I want is to be convinced.

Euph. That point is not so clear.

Alc. But if a man had ever so much mind, he cannot be convinced by probable arguments against demonstration.

Euph. I grant he cannot.

4. *Alc.* Now, it is as evident as demonstration can make it, that no Divine faith can possibly be built upon tradition. Suppose an honest and credulous countryman catechised and lectured every Sunday by his parish priest: it is plain he believes in the parson, and not in God. He knows nothing of revelations, and doctrines, and miracles but what the priest tells him. This he believes, and this faith is purely human. If you say he has the Liturgy and the Bible for the foundation of his faith, the difficulty still recurs. For, as to the Liturgy, he pins his faith upon the civil magistrate, as well as the ecclesiastic: neither of which can pretend Divine inspiration. Then for the Bible, he takes both that and his Prayer-book on trust from the printer, who, he believes, made true

[47] The latter part of the sixth century is the probable date of the Alexandrian Codex, that celebrated MS. of Holy Scripture, in Greek, now in the British Museum.

editions from true copies. You see then faith, but what faith? Faith in the priest, in the magistrate, in the printer, editor, transcriber, none of which can with any pretence be called Divine. I had the hint from Cratylus[48]; it is a shaft out of his quiver, and believe me, a keen one.

Euph. Let me take and make trial of this same shaft in my hands. Suppose then your countryman hears a magistrate declare the law from the bench, or suppose he reads it in a statute-book. What think you, is the printer or the justice the true and proper object of his faith and submission? Or do you acknowledge a higher authority whereon to found those loyal acts, and in which they do really terminate? Again, suppose you read a passage in Tacitus that you believe true; would you say you assented to it on the authority of the printer or transcriber rather than the historian?

Alc. Perhaps I would, and perhaps I would not. I do not think myself obliged to answer these points. What is this but transferring the question from one subject to another? That which we considered was neither law nor profane history, but religious tradition, and Divine faith. I see plainly what you aim at, but shall never take for an answer to one difficulty, the starting of another.

Cri. O Alciphron! there is no taking hold of you, who expect that others should (as you were pleased to express[49]) hold fair and stand firm, while you plucked out their prejudices. How shall he argue with you but from your concessions, and how can he know what you grant except you will be pleased to tell him?

Euph. But, to save you the trouble, for once I will suppose an answer. My question admits but of two answers: take your choice. From the one it will follow that, by a parity of reason, we can easily conceive how a man may have Divine faith, though he never felt inspiration or saw a miracle: inasmuch as it is equally possible for the mind, through whatever conduit, oral or scriptural, Divine revelation be derived, to carry its thoughts and submission up to the source, and terminate its faith not in human but Divine authority; not in the instrument or vessel

[48] See Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, vol. I. pp. 146, 147; III. pp. 72, 320—324.
[49] Dial. I. sect. 5.

of conveyance, but in the great origin itself, as its proper and true object. From the other answer it will follow that you introduce a general scepticism into human knowledge, and break down the hinges on which civil government, and all the affairs of the world, turn and depend: in a word, that you would destroy human faith to get rid of Divine. And how this agrees with your professing that you want to be convinced I leave you to consider.

5. *Alc.* I should in earnest be glad to be convinced one way or other, and come to some conclusion. But I have so many objections in store you are not to count much upon getting over one. Depend on it you shall find me behave like a gentleman and a lover of truth. I will propose my objections briefly and plainly, and accept of reasonable answers as fast as you can give them. Come, Euphranor, make the most of your tradition; you can never make that a constant and universal one, which is acknowleged to have been unknown, or at best disputed, in the Church for several ages:—and this is the case of the canon of the New Testament. For, though we have now a canon, as they call it, settled, yet every one must see and own that tradition cannot grow stronger by age; and that what was uncertain in the primitive times cannot be undoubted in the subsequent. What say you to this, Euphranor?

Euph. I should be glad to conceive your meaning clearly before I return an answer. It seems to me this objection of yours supposeth that where a tradition hath been constant and undisputed, such tradition may be admitted as a proof; but that where the tradition is defective, the proof must be so too. Is this your meaning?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Consequently the Gospels, and Epistles of St. Paul, which were universally received in the beginning, and never since doubted of by the Church, must, notwithstanding this objection, be in reason admitted for genuine. And, if these books contain, as they really do, all those points that come into controversy between you and me, what need I dispute with you about the authority of some other books of the New Testament, which came later to be generally known and received in the Church? If a

man assent to the undisputed books, he is no longer an infidel; though he should not hold the Revelations, or the Epistle of St. James or Jude, or the latter of St. Peter, or the two last of St. John to be canonical. The additional authority of these portions of Holy Scripture may have its weight in particular controversies between Christians, but can add nothing to arguments against an infidel as such. Wherefore, though I believe good reasons may be assigned for receiving these books, yet these reasons seem now beside our purpose. When you are a Christian it will be then time enough to argue this point. And you will be the nearer being so, if the way be shortened by omitting it for the present.

Alc. Not so near neither as you perhaps imagine: for, notwithstanding all the fair and plausible things you may say about tradition, when I consider the spirit of forgery which reigned in the primitive times, and reflect on the several Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, attributed to the apostles, which yet are acknowledged to be spurious, I confess I cannot help suspecting the whole.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, do you suspect all Plato's writings for spurious, because the *Dialogue upon Death*, for instance, is allowed to be so? Or will you admit none of Tully's writings to be genuine, because Sigonius[50] imposed a book of his own writing for Tully's treatise *De Consolatione*, and the imposture passed for some time on the world?

Alc. Suppose I admit for the works of Tully and Plato those that commonly pass for such. What then?

Euph. Why then I would fain know whether it be equal and impartial in a free-thinker, to measure the credibility of profane and sacred books by a different rule. Let us know upon what foot we Christians are to argue with minute philosophers; whether we may be allowed the benefit of common maxims in logic and criticism? If we may, be pleased to assign a reason why suppositious writings, which in the style and manner and matter bear visible marks of imposture, and have accordingly been rejected

[50] Sigonius (Sigonio or Sigone), a famous Italian scholar and antiquary in the sixteenth century, who passed off as genuine a skilful imitation of Cicero, in the form of a treatise *De Consolatione*, of which he was himself the author. It was accepted at the time by many of the learned, and Tiraboshi was undeceived only by finding letters in which Sigonius allows the forgery.

by the Church, can be made an argument against those which have been universally received, and handed down by an unanimous constant tradition. There have been in all ages, and in all great societies of men many capricious, vain, or wicked impostors, who for different ends have abused the world by spurious writings, and created work for critics both in profane and sacred learning. And it would seem as silly to reject the true writings of profane authors for the sake of the spurious, as it would seem unreasonable to suppose, that among the heretics and several sects of Christians there should be none capable of the like imposture.

[[51]*Alc.* I see no means for judging: it is all dark and doubtful; mere guess-work, at so great distance of time.

Cri. But if I know that a number of fit persons, met together in Council, did examine and distinguish authentic writings from spurious, relating to a point of the highest concern, in an age near the date of those writings; though I at the distance of many more centuries had no other proof, yet their decision may be of weight to determine my judgment. Since it is probable they might have had several proofs and reasons for what they did, and not at all improbable that those reasons might be lost in so long a tract of time[52].]

6. *Alc.* But, be the tradition ever so well attested, and the books ever so genuine, yet I cannot suppose them wrote by persons divinely inspired so long as I see in them certain characters inconsistent with such a supposition. Surely the purest language, the most perfect style, the exactest method, and in a word all the excellences of good writing, might be expected in a piece composed or dictated by the Spirit of God. But books wherein we find the reverse of all this, it were impious not to reject, but to attribute to the Divinity.

Euph. Say, Alciphron, are the lakes, the rivers, or the ocean, bounded by straight lines? Are the hills and mountains exact cones or pyramids? Or the stars cast into regular figures?

Alc. They are not.

Euph. But in the works of insects we may observe figures as exact as if they were drawn by the rule and compass.

[51] Added in the second edition, and omitted afterwards.

[52] [Vide Can. LX. Concil. Laodicen.]—AUTHOR.

Alc. We may.

Euph. Should it not seem, therefore, that a regular exactness, or scrupulous attention to what men call the rules of art, is not observed in the great productions of the Author of nature?

Alc. It should.

Euph. And when a great prince declareth his will in laws and edicts to his subjects, is he careful about a pure style or elegant composition? Does he not leave his secretaries and clerks to express his sense in their own words? Is not the phrase on such occasions thought proper if it conveys as much as was intended? And would not the divine strain of certain modern critics be judged affected, and improper for such uses?

Alc. It must be owned, laws, and edicts, and grants, for solecism and tautology, are very offensive to the harmonious ears of a fine writer.

Euph. Why then should we expect in the Oracles of God an exactness that would be misbecoming and beneath the dignity of an earthly monarch, and which bears no proportion or resemblance to the magnificent works of the creation?

Alc. But, granting that a nice regard to particles and critical rules is a thing too little and mean to be expected in Divine revelations; and that there is more force, and spirit, and true greatness in a negligent, unequal style, than in the well-turned periods of a polite writer;—yet what is all this to the bald and flat compositions of those you call the Divine penmen? I can never be persuaded the Supreme Being would pick out the poorest and meanest scribblers for his secretaries.

Euph. O Alciphron! if I durst follow my own judgment, I should be apt to think there are noble beauties in the style of the Holy Scripture: in the narrative parts a strain so simple and unaffected: in the devotional and prophetic so animated and sublime: and in the doctrinal parts such an air of dignity and authority as seems to speak their original Divine. But I shall not enter into a dispute about taste; much less set up my judgment on so nice a point against that of the wits, and men of genius, with which your sect abounds. And I have no temptation to it, inasmuch as it seems to me the Oracles of God are not the less so for being delivered in a plain dress, rather than in 'the enticing words of man's wisdom.'

Alc. This may perhaps be an apology for some simplicity and negligence in writing.

7. But what apology can be made for nonsense, crude nonsense? Of which I could easily assign many instances, having once in my life read the Scripture through with that very view. Look here, said he, opening a Bible, in the forty-ninth Psalm, the author begins magnificently, calling upon all the inhabitants of the earth to give ear, and assuring them his mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of his heart shall be of understanding:

Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu?

He hath no sooner done with his preface but he puts this senseless question, 'Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil; when the wickedness of my heels shall compass me about?' The iniquity of my heels! What nonsense after such a solemn introduction!

Euph. For my own part, I have naturally weak eyes, and know there are many things that I cannot see, which are nevertheless distinctly seen by others. I do not therefore conclude a thing to be absolutely invisible, because it is so to me. And, since it is possible it may be with my understanding as it is with my eyes, I dare not pronounce a thing to be nonsense, because I do not understand it. Of this passage many interpretations are given. The word rendered *heels* may signify fraud or supplantation: by some it is translated 'past wickedness,' the heel being the hinder part of the foot; by others 'iniquity in the end of my days,' the heel being one extremity of the body; by some 'the iniquity of my enemies that may supplant me;' by others 'my own faults or iniquities which I have passed over as light matters, and trampled under my feet.' Some render it 'the iniquity of my ways;' others, 'my transgressions, which are like slips and slidings of the heel.' And after all, might not this expression, so harsh and odd to English ears, have been very natural and obvious in the Hebrew tongue, which, as every other language, had its idioms? the force and propriety whereof may as easily be conceived lost in a long tract of time, as the signification of some Hebrew words which are not now intelligible, though nobody doubts but they had once a meaning as well as the other words of that language. Granting,

therefore, that certain passages in the Holy Scripture may not be understood, it will not thence follow that its penman wrote nonsense; for I conceive nonsense to be one thing, and unintelligible another.

Cri. An English gentleman of my acquaintance one day entertaining some foreigners at his house sent a servant to know the occasion of a sudden tumult in the yard, who brought him word, 'the horses were fallen together by the ears.' His guests inquiring what the matter was, he translates it literally, *Les chevaux sont tombez ensemble par les oreilles:* which made them stare; what expressed a very plain sense in the original English being incomprehensible when rendered word for word into French. And I remember to have heard a man excuse the bulls of his countrymen, by supposing them so many literal translations.

Euph. But, not to grow tedious, I refer to the critics and commentators, where you will find the use of this remark, which, clearing up several obscure passages you take for nonsense, may possibly incline you to suspect your own judgment of the rest. In this very psalm you have pitched on, the good sense and moral contained in what follows, should, methinks, make a candid reader judge favourably of the original sense of the author, in that part which he could not understand. Say, Alciphron, in reading the classics, do you forthwith conclude every passage to be nonsense that you cannot make sense of?

Alc. By no means; difficulties must be supposed to rise from different idioms, old customs, hints, and allusions, clear in one time or place, and obscure in another.

Euph. And why will you not judge of Scripture by the same rule? These sources of obscurity you mention are all common both to sacred and profane writings; and there is no doubt but an exacter knowledge in language and circumstances would in both cause difficulties to vanish like shades before the light of the sun. Jeremiah, to describe a furious invader, saith, 'Behold he shall come up as a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong[33].' One would be apt to think this passage odd and improper, and that it had been more reasonable to have said, 'a lion from the mountain or the desert.' But travellers, as an

[33] Jeremiah xlix. 19.

ingenious man observes, who have seen the river Jordan bounded by low lands with many reeds or thickets affording shelter to wild beasts (which being suddenly dislodged by a rapid overflowing of the river rush into the upland country), perceive the force and propriety of the comparison; and that the difficulty proceeds, not from nonsense in the writer, but from ignorance in the reader. It is needless to amass together instances which may be found in every commentator. I only beg leave to observe, that sometimes men looking higher or deeper than they need, for a profound or remote sense, overlook the natural obvious sense lying, if I may so say, at their feet, and so make difficulties instead of finding them. This seems to be the case of that celebrated passage, which hath created so much work, in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians[84]: 'What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?' I remember to have heard this text explained by Laches, the vicar of our parish, to my neighbour Lycon, who was much perplexed about its meaning. If it had been translated, as it might very justly, 'baptized for the sake of the dead,' I do not see, said Laches, why people should be puzzled about the sense of this passage; for, tell me, I beseech you, for whose sake do you think those Christians were baptized? For whose sake, answered Lycon, but their own? How do you mean, for their own sake in this life, or the next? Doubtless, in the next, for it was plain they could get nothing by it in this. They were then, replied Laches, baptized not for the sake of themselves while living, but for the sake of themselves when dead; not for the living, but the dead? I grant it. Baptism, therefore, must have been to them a fruitless thing, if the dead rise not at all? It must. Whence Laches inferred that St. Paul's argument was clear and pertinent for the resurrection: and Lycon allowed it to be *argumentum ad hominem* to those who had sought baptism. There is then, concluded Laches, no necessity for supposing that living men were in those days baptized instead of those who died without baptism, or of running into any other odd suppositions or strained and far-fetched interpretation to make sense of this passage.

Alc. Here and there a difficult passage may be cleared: but

[84] 1 Corinth. xv. 29.

there are many which no art or wit of man can account for. What say you to those discoveries, made by some of our learned writers, of false citations from the Old Testament found in the Gospel?

Euph. That some few passages are cited by the writers of the New Testament out of the Old, and by the Fathers out of the New, which are not in so many words to be found in them, is no new discovery of minute philosophers, but was known and observed long before by Christian writers; who have made no scruple to grant that some things might have been inserted by careless or mistaken transcribers into the text, from the margin, others left out, and others altered; whence so many various readings. But these are things of small moment, and which all other ancient authors have been subject to; and upon which no point of doctrine depends which may not be proved without them. Nay further, if it be any advantage to your cause, it hath been observed, that the eighteenth Psalm, as recited in the twenty-second chapter of the Second Book of Samuel, varies in about forty places, if you regard every little verbal or literal difference; and that a critic may now and then discover small variations is what nobody can deny. But, to make the most of these concessions, what can you infer from them more than that the design of the Holy Scripture was not to make us exactly knowing in circumstantials? and that the Spirit did not dictate every particle and syllable, or preserve them from every minute alteration by miracle? which to believe, would look like Rabbinical superstition.

Alc. But what marks of Divinity can possibly be in writings which do not reach the exactness even of human art?

Euph. I never thought nor expected that the Holy Scripture should show itself Divine, by a circumstantial accuracy of narration, by exactness of method, by strictly observing the rules of rhetoric, grammar, and criticism, in harmonious periods, in elegant and choice expressions, or in technical definitions and partitions. These things would look too like a human composition. Methinks there is in that simple, unaffected, artless, unequal, bold, figurative style of the Holy Scripture, a character singularly great and majestic, and that looks more like Divine inspiration than any other composition that I know. But, as I said before, I shall not

dispute a point of criticism with the gentlemen of your sect, who, it seems, are the modern standard for wit and taste.

Alc. Well, I shall not insist on small slips, or the inaccuracy of citing or transcribing. And I freely own, that repetitions, want of method, or want of exactness in circumstances, are not the things that chiefly stick with me; no more than the plain patriarchal manners, or the peculiar usages and customs of the Jews and first Christians, so different from ours; and that to reject the Scripture on such accounts would be to act like those French wits who censure Homer because they do not find in him the style, notions, and manners of their own age and country. Was there nothing else to divide us, I should make no great difficulty of owning that a popular incorrect style might answer the general ends of revelation, as well perhaps as a more critical and exact one. But the obscurity still sticks with me. Methinks if the supreme Being had spoke to man, He would have spoke clearly to him, and that the Word of God should not need a comment.

8. *Euph.* You seem, Alciphron, to think obscurity a defect; but if it should prove to be no defect, there would then be no force in this objection.

Alc. I grant there would not.

Euph. Pray tell me, are not speech and style instrumental to convey thoughts and notions, to beget knowledge, opinion, and assent?

Alc. This is true.

Euph. And is not the perfection of an instrument to be measured by the use to which it is subservient?

Alc. It is.

Euph. What therefore is a defect in one instrument may be none in another. For instance, edged tools are in general designed to cut; but, the uses of an axe and a razor being different, it is no defect in an axe that it hath not the keen edge of a razor; nor in a razor that it hath not the weight or strength of an axe.

Alc. I acknowledge this to be true.

Euph. And may we not say in general, that every instrument is perfect which answers the purpose or intention of him who useth it.

Alc. We may.

Euph. Hence it seems to follow, that no man's speech is defective in point of clearness, though it should not be intelligible to all men, if it be sufficiently so to those who he intended should understand it; or though it should not in all parts be equally clear, or convey a perfect knowledge, where he intended only an imperfect hint.

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. Ought we not therefore to know the intention of the speaker, to be able to know whether his style be obscure through defect or design?

Alc. We ought.

Euph. But is it possible for one man to know all the ends and purposes of God's revelations?

Alc. It is not.

Euph. How then can you tell but the obscurity of some parts of Scripture may well consist with the purpose which you know not, and consequently be no argument against its coming from God? The books of Holy Scripture were written in ancient languages, at distant times, on sundry occasions, and very different subjects. Is it not, therefore, reasonable to imagine that some parts or passages might have been clearly enough understood by those for whose proper use they were principally designed, and yet seem obscure to us, who speak another language, and live in other times? Is it at all absurd or unsuitable to the notion we have of God or man, to suppose that God may reveal, and yet reveal with a reserve upon certain remote and sublime subjects, content to give us hints and glimpses, rather than views? May we not also suppose, from the reason of things and the analogy of nature, that some points, which might otherwise have been more clearly explained, were left obscure merely to encourage our diligence and modesty? Two virtues, which, if it might not seem disrespectful to such great men, I would recommend to the minute philosophers.

Lysicles replied, This indeed is excellent! You expect that men of sense and spirit should in great humility put out their eyes, and blindly swallow all the absurdities and nonsense that shall be offered to them for Divine revelation.

Euph. On the contrary, I would have them open their eyes, look

sharply, and try the spirit, whether it is of God; and not supinely and ignorantly condemn in the gross all religions together, piety with superstition, truth for the sake of error, matter of fact for the sake of fiction: a conduct which at first sight would seem absurd in history, physic, or any other branch of human inquiry. But, to compare the Christian system, or Holy Scriptures, with other pretences to Divine revelation; to consider impartially the doctrines, precepts, and events therein contained; weigh them in the balance with any other religious, natural, moral, or historical accounts; and diligently to examine all those proofs, internal and external, that for so many ages have been able to influence and persuade so many wise, learned, and inquisitive men—perhaps they might find in it certain peculiar characters which sufficiently distinguish it from all other religions and pretended revelations, whereon to ground a reasonable faith. In which case, I leave them to consider whether it would be right to reject with peremptory scorn a revelation so distinguished and attested, upon account of obscurity in some parts of it? and whether it would seem beneath men of their sense and spirit to acknowledge that, for aught they know, a light inadequate to things may yet be adequate to the purpose of Providence? and whether it might be unbecoming their sagacity and critical skill to own, that literal translations from books in an ancient oriental tongue, wherein there are so many peculiarities, as to the manner of writing, the figures of speech, and structure of the phrase, so remote from all our modern idioms, and in which we have no other coeval writings extant, might well be obscure in many places, especially such as treat of subjects sublime and difficult in their own nature, or allude to things, customs, or events very distant from our knowledge? And lastly, whether it might not become their character, as impartial and unprejudiced men, to consider the Bible in the same light they would profane authors? They are apt to make great allowance for transpositions, omissions, and literal errors of transcribers in other ancient books; and very great for the difference of style and manner, especially in Eastern writings, such as the remains of Zoroaster and Confucius, and why not in the Prophets? In reading Horace or Persius, to make out the sense, they will be at the pains to discover a hidden drama, and why not in Solomon or St. Paul? I hear there are certain ingenious men

who despise King David's poetry, and yet profess to admire Homer and Pindar. If there be no prejudice or affectation in this, let them but make a literal version from those authors into English prose, and they will then be better able to judge of the Psalms.

Alc. You may discourse and expatiate; but, notwithstanding all you have said or shall say, it is a clear point, that a revelation which doth not reveal can be no better than a contradiction in terms.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, do you not acknowledge the light of the sun to be the most glorious production of Providence in this natural world?

Alc. Suppose I do.

Euph. This light, nevertheless, which you cannot deny to be of God's making, shines only on the surface of things, shines not at all in the night, shines imperfectly in the twilight, is often interrupted, refracted, and obscured, represents distant things and small things dubiously, imperfectly, or not at all. Is this true or no?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Should it not follow, therefore, that to expect in this world a light from God, without any mixture of shade or mystery, would be departing from the rule and analogy of the creation? and that, consequently, it is no argument the light of revelation is not Divine, because it may not be so clear and full as you expect [; [55]or because it may not equally shine at all times, or in all places].

Alc. As I profess myself candid and indifferent throughout this debate, I must needs own you say some plausible things, as a man of argument will never fail to do in vindication of his prejudices.

9. But, to deal plainly, I must tell you, once for all, that you may question and answer, illustrate, and enlarge for ever, without being able to convince me that the Christian religion is of Divine revelation. I have said several things, and have many more to say, which, believe me, have weight not only with

[55] Added in second edition, and omitted afterwards.

myself, but with many great men my very good friends, and will have weight whatever Euphranor can say to the contrary.

Euph. O Alciphron! I envy you the happiness of such acquaintance. But, as my lot, fallen in this remote corner, deprives me of that advantage, I am obliged to make the most of this opportunity which you and Lysicles have put into my hands. I consider you as two able chirurgeons, and you were pleased to consider me as a patient, whose cure you have generously undertaken. Now, a patient must have full liberty to explain his case, and tell all his symptoms, the concealing or palliating of which might prevent a perfect cure. You will be pleased therefore to understand me, not as objecting to, or arguing against, either your skill or medicines, but only as setting forth my own case, and the effects they have upon me. Say, Alciphron, did you not give me to understand that you would extirpate my prejudices?

Alc. It is true: a good physician eradicates every fibre of the disease. Come, you shall have a patient hearing.

Euph. Pray, was it not the opinion of Plato, that God inspired particular men, as organs or trumpets, to proclaim and sound forth his oracles to the world[56]? And was not the same opinion also embraced by others the greatest writers of antiquity?

Cri. Socrates seems to have thought that all true poets spoke by inspiration; and Tully, that there was no extraordinary genius without it. This hath made some of our affected free-thinkers attempt to pass themselves upon the world for enthusiasts.

Alc. What would you infer from all this?

Euph. I would infer that inspiration should seem nothing impossible or absurd, but rather agreeable to the light of reason and the notions of mankind. And this, I suppose, you will acknowledge, having made it an objection against a particular revelation, that there are so many pretences to it throughout the world.

Alc. O Euphranor! he who looks into the bottom of things, and resolves them into their first principles, is not easily amused with words. The word *inspiration* sounds indeed big, but let us, if

[56] [Plato in Ione.]—AUTHOR. In the *Io*, poetic inspiration is treated of, as that in which Divine principles of science and operations of art are unconsciously expressed, under the impulse of the Muse.

you please, take an original view of the thing signified by it. To *inspire* is a word borrowed from the Latin, and, strictly taken, means no more than to breathe or blow in; nothing, therefore, can be inspired but what can be blown or breathed; and nothing can be so but wind or vapour, which indeed may fill or puff up men with fanatical and hypochondriacal ravings. This sort of inspiration I very readily admit.

Euph. What you say is subtle, and I know not what effect it might have upon me, if your profound discourse did not hinder its own operation.

Alc. How so?

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, do you discourse, or do you not? To me it seems that you discourse admirably.

Alc. Be that as it will, it is certain I discourse.

Euph. But, when I endeavour to look into the bottom of things, behold! a scruple riseth in my mind how this can be; for, to *discourse* is a word of Latin derivation, which originally signifies to run about; and a man cannot run about but he must change place, and move his legs; so long, therefore, as you sit on this bench, you cannot be said to discourse. Solve me this difficulty, and then perhaps I may be able to solve yours.

Alc. You are to know, that *discourse* is a word borrowed from sensible things, to express an invisible action of the mind, reasoning or inferring one thing from another; and, in this translated sense, we may be said to discourse though we sit still.

Euph. And may we not as well conceive that the term *inspiration* might be borrowed from sensible things, to denote an action of God, in an extraordinary manner, influencing, exciting, and enlightening the mind of a prophet or an apostle? who, in this secondary, figurative, and translated sense, may truly be said to be inspired, though there should be nothing in the case of that wind or vapour implied in the original sense of the word? It seems to me that we may, by looking into our own minds, plainly perceive certain instincts, impulses, and tendencies, which, at proper periods and occasions, spring up unaccountably in the soul of man. We observe very visible signs of the same in all other animals. And, these things being ordinary and natural, what hinders but we may conceive it possible for the human mind,

upon an extraordinary account, to be moved in an extraordinary manner, and its faculties stirred up and actuated by supernatural power? That there are, and have been, and are likely to be, wild visions and hypochondriacal ravings, nobody can deny; but, to infer from thence that there are no true inspirations would be too like concluding, that some men are not in their senses, because other men are fools. And, though I am no prophet, and consequently cannot pretend to a clear notion of this matter, yet I shall not therefore take upon me to deny but a true prophet or inspired person might have had a certain means of discerning between Divine inspiration and hypochondriacal fancy, as you can between sleeping and waking, till you have proved the contrary. You may meet in the book of Jeremiah with this passage, 'The prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream: and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully: what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord? Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces[57]?' You see here a distinction made between wheat and chaff, true and spurious, with the mighty force and power of the former. But I beg pardon for quoting Scripture to you. I make my appeal to the general sense of mankind, and the opinion of the wisest heathens, which seems sufficient to conclude Divine inspiration possible, if not probable—at least till you prove the contrary.

10. *Alc.* The possibility of inspirations and revelations I do not think it necessary to deny. Make the best you can of this concession.

Euph. Now what is allowed possible we may suppose in fact.

Alc. We may.

Euph. Let us then suppose that God had been pleased to make a revelation to men; and that He inspired some as a means to instruct others. Having supposed this, can you deny that their inspired discourses and revelations might have been committed to writing, or that, being written, after a long tract of time they might become in several places obscure; that some of them might even originally have been less clear than others, or that they might suffer some alteration by frequent transcribing, as other writings

[57] [Jer. xxiii. 28, 29.]—AUTHOR.

are known to have done? Is it not even very probable that all these things would happen?

Alc. I grant it.

Euph. And, granting this, with what pretence can you reject the Holy Scriptures as not being Divine, upon the account of such signs or marks as you acknowledge would probably attend a Divine revelation transmitted down to us through so many ages?

Alc. But allowing all that in reason you can desire, and granting that this may account for some obscurity, may reconcile some small differences, or satisfy us how some difficulties might arise, by inserting, omitting, or changing, here and there a letter, a word, or perhaps a sentence; yet these are but small matters, in respect of the much more considerable and weighty objections I could produce against the confessed doctrines, or subject-matter of those writings. Let us see what is contained in these sacred books, and then judge whether it is probable or possible such revelations should ever have been made by God. Now, I defy the wit of man to contrive anything more extravagant than the accounts we there find of apparitions, devils, miracles, God manifest in the flesh, regeneration, grace, self-denial, resurrection of the dead, and such-like *ægri somnia:* things so odd, unaccountable, and remote from the apprehension of mankind, you may as soon wash a blackamore white as clear them of absurdity. No critical skill can justify them, no tradition recommend them, I will not say for Divine revelations, but even for the inventions of men of sense.

Euph. I had always a great opinion of your sagacity, but now, Alciphron, I consider you as something more than man; else how should it be possible for you to know what or how far it may be proper for God to reveal? Methinks it may consist with all due deference to the greatest of human understandings, to suppose them ignorant of many things, which are not suited to their faculties, or lie out of their reach. Even the counsels of princes lie often beyond the ken of their subjects, who can only know so much as is revealed by those at the helm; and are often unqualified to judge of the usefulness and tendency even of that, till in due time the scheme unfolds, and is accounted for by succeeding events. That many points contained in Holy Scripture are remote from the common apprehensions of mankind cannot be

denied. But I do not see that it follows from thence they are not of Divine revelation. On the contrary, should it not seem reasonable to suppose that a revelation from God should contain something different in kind, or more excellent in degree, than what lay open to the common sense of men, or could even be discovered by the most sagacious philosopher? Accounts of separate spirits, good or bad, prophecies, miracles, and such things, are undoubtedly strange; but I would fain see how you can prove them impossible or absurd.

Alc. Some things there are so evidently absurd that it would be almost as silly to disprove them as to believe them; and I take these to be of that class.

11. *Euph.* But is it not possible some men may shew as much prejudice and narrowness in rejecting all such accounts as others might easiness and credulity in admitting them? I never durst make my own observation or experience the rule and measure of things spiritual, supernatural, or relating to another world; because I should think it a very bad one even for the visible and natural things of this. It would be judging like the Siamese, who was positive it did not freeze in Holland, because he had never known such a thing as hard water or ice in his own country[58]. I cannot comprehend why any one who admits the union of the soul and body should pronounce it impossible for the human nature to be united to the Divine, in a manner ineffable and incomprehensible by reason. Neither can I see any absurdity in admitting that sinful man may become regenerate, or a new creature, by the grace of God reclaiming him from a carnal life to a spiritual life of virtue and holiness. And since the being governed by sense and appetite is contrary to the happiness and perfection of a rational creature, I do not at all wonder that we are prescribed self-denial. As for the resurrection of the dead, I do not conceive it so very contrary to the analogy of nature, when I behold vegetables left to rot in the earth rise up again with new life and vigour, or a worm, to all appearance dead, change its nature, and that, which in its first being crawled on the earth, become a new species, and fly abroad with wings. And indeed, when I consider that the soul

[58] So Hume, on Miracles.

and body are things so very different and heterogeneous, I can see no reason to be positive that the one must necessarily be extinguished upon the dissolution of the other; especially since I find in myself a strong natural desire of immortality, and I have not observed that natural appetites are wont to be given in vain, or merely to be frustrated. Upon the whole, those points which you account extravagant and absurd, I dare not pronounce to be so till I see good reason for it.

12. *Cri.* No, Alciphron, your positive airs must not pass for proofs; nor will it suffice to say, things are contrary to common sense, to make us think they are so. By *common sense*, I suppose, should be meant, either the general sense of mankind, or the improved reason of thinking men. Now, I believe that all those articles you have with so much capacity and fire at once summed up and exploded may be shewn to be not disagreeable, much less contrary, to common sense in one or other of these acceptations. —That the gods might appear and converse among men and that the Divinity might inhabit human nature were points allowed by the heathens; and for this I appeal to their poets and philosophers, whose testimonies are so numerous and clear that it would be an affront to repeat them to a man of any education.—And, though the notion of a Devil[59] may not be so obvious, or so fully described, yet there appear plain traces of it, either from reason or tradition. The latter Platonists, as Porphyry and Jamblichus, are very clear in the point, allowing that evil demons delude and tempt, hurt and possess mankind. That the ancient Greeks, Chaldeans, and Egyptians believed both good and bad angels may be plainly collected from Plato, Plutarch, and the Chaldean oracles. Origen observes, that almost all the Gentiles, who held the being of demons, allowed there were bad ones[60]. There is even something as early as Homer, that is thought by the learned Cardinal Bessarion[61] to allude to the fall of Satan, in the account of Ate, whom the poet represents as cast down from heaven by Jove, and then wandering about the earth, doing mischief to mankind. The same

[59] The result of more recent critical examination of the history of this notion modifies what follows.

[60] [Origen, lib. VII. contra Celsum.]—Author.

[61] [In Calumniat. Platonis, lib. III. cap. 7.]—Author.

Ate is said by Hesiod to be the daughter of Discord: and by Euripides, in his Hippolytus, is mentioned as a tempter to evil. And it is very remarkable that Plutarch, in his book *De Vitando Ære Alieno*, speaks, after Empedocles, of certain demons that fell from heaven, and were banished by God, *Δαίμονες θεήλατοι καὶ οὐρανοπεπεῖς*. Nor is that less remarkable which is observed by Ficinus, from Pherecydes Syrus, that there had been a downfall of demons who revolted from God; and that Ophioneus (the old serpent) was head of that rebellious crew[62].—Then, as to other articles, let any one consider what the Pythagoreans taught of the purgation and λύσις, or deliverance of the soul: what most philosophers, but especially the Stoics, of subduing our passions: what Plato and Hierocles have said of forgiving injuries: what the acute and sagacious Aristotle writes in his Ethics to Nichomachus, of the spiritual and Divine life—that life which, according to him, is too excellent to be thought human; insomuch as man, so far forth as man, cannot attain to it, but only so far forth as he has something Divine in him: and, particularly, let him reflect on what Socrates taught, to wit, that virtue is not to be learned from men, that it is the gift of God, and that good men are not good by virtue of human care or diligence, *οὔκ εἶναι ἀνθρωπίνην ἐπιμέλειαν ἢ ἀγαθοὶ ἀγαθοὶ γίγνονται*[63]. Let any man who really thinks but consider what other thinking men have thought, who cannot be supposed prejudiced in favour of revealed religion; and he will see cause, if not to think with reverence of the Christian doctrines of grace, self-denial, regeneration, sanctification, and the rest, even the most mysterious, at least to judge more modestly and warily than those who shall, with a confident air, pronounce them absurd, and repugnant to the reason of mankind. And, in regard to a future state, the common sense of the gentile world, modern or ancient, and the opinions of the wisest men of antiquity, are things so well known, that I need say nothing about them. To me it seems, the minute philosophers, when they appeal to reason and common sense, mean only the sense of their own party: a coin, how current soever among themselves, that other men will bring to the touchstone, and pass for no more than it is worth.

[62] [Vide Argum. in Phædrum Platonis.]—AUTHOR.

[63] [Vide Plat. in Protag. et alibi passim.] AUTHOR.

Lys. Be those notions agreeable to what or whose sense they may, they are not agreeable to mine. And if I am thought ignorant for this, I pity those who think me so.

13. I enjoy myself, and follow my own courses, without remorse or fear; which I should not do, if my head were filled with enthusiasm; whether gentile or Christian, philosophical or revealed, it is all one to me. Let others know or believe what they can, and make the best of it; I, for my part, am happy and safe in my ignorance.

Cri. Perhaps not so safe neither.

Lys. Why, surely you will not pretend that ignorance is criminal?

Cri. Ignorance alone is not a crime. But that wilful ignorance, affected ignorance, ignorance from sloth, or conceited ignorance, is a fault, might easily be proved by the testimony of heathen writers; and it needs no proof to shew that, if ignorance be our fault, we cannot be secure in it as an excuse.

Lys. Honest Crito seems to hint that a man should take care to inform himself while alive, lest his neglect be punished when he is dead. Nothing is so pusillanimous and unbecoming a gentleman as fear; nor could you take a likelier course to fix and rivet a man of honour in guilt, than by attempting to frighten him out of it. This is the stale absurd stratagem of priests, and that which makes them and their religion more odious and contemptible to me than all the other articles put together.

Cri. I would fain know why it may not be reasonable for a man of honour, or any man who has done amiss, to fear. Guilt is the natural parent of fear; and nature is not used to make men fear where there is no occasion. That impious and profane men should expect Divine punishment doth not seem so absurd to conceive: and that, under this expectation, they should be uneasy and even afraid, how consistent soever it may or may not be with honour, I am sure consists with reason.

Lys. That thing of hell and eternal punishment is the most absurd as well as the most disagreeable thought that ever entered the head of mortal man.

Cri. But you must own that it is not an absurdity peculiar to Christians, since Socrates, that great free-thinker of Athens,

thought it probable there may be such a thing as impious men for ever punished in hell[64]. It is recorded of this same Socrates, that he has been often known to think for four-and-twenty hours together, fixed in the same posture, and wrapped up in meditation.

Lys. Our modern free-thinkers are a more lively sort of men. Those old philosophers were most of them whimsical. They had, in my judgment, a dry, narrow, timorous way of thinking, which by no means came up to the frank humour of our times.

Cri. But I appeal to your own judgment, if a man who knows not the nature of the soul can be assured, by the light of reason, whether it is mortal or immortal?

> An simul intereat nobiscum morte perempta,
> An tenebras orci visat vastasque lacunas?

Lys. But what if I know the nature of the soul? What if I have been taught that whole secret by a modern free-thinker? a man of science who discovered it not by a tiresome introversion of his faculties, not by amusing himself in a labyrinth of notions, or stupidly thinking for whole days and nights together, but by looking into things, and observing the analogy of nature.

14. This great man is a philosopher by fire, who has made many processes upon vegetables. It is his opinion that men and vegetables are really of the same species; that animals are moving vegetables, and vegetables fixed animals; that the mouths of the one and the roots of the other serve to the same use, differing only in position; that blossoms and flowers answer to the most indecent and concealed parts of the human body; that vegetable and animal bodies are both alike organized, and that in both there is life, or a certain motion and circulation of juices through proper tubes or vessels. I shall never forget this able man's unfolding the nature of the soul in the following manner:—The soul, said he, is that specific form or principle from whence proceed the distinct qualities or properties of things. Now, as vegetables are a more simple and less perfect compound, and consequently more easily analysed than animals, we will begin with the contemplation of

[64] Vide Platon. in Gorgia.]—AUTHOR. See Socrates at the end of the *Gorgias*. This is the only distinct reference in Berkeley's works to unending punishment in a future life. Cf. *Guardian*, No. 27, where Socrates is quoted.

the souls of vegetables. Know then that the soul of any plant, rosemary for instance, is neither more nor less than its essential oil[65]. Upon this depends its peculiar fragrance, taste, and medicinal virtues, or in other words its life and operations. Separate or extract this essential oil by chemic art, and you get the soul of the plant; what remains being a dead carcass, without any one property or virtue of the plant, which is preserved entire in the oil, a drachm whereof goes further than several pounds of the plant. Now this same essential oil is itself a composition of sulphur and salt, or of a gross unctuous substance, and a fine subtle principle or volatile salt imprisoned therein[65]. The volatile salt is properly the essence of the soul of the plant, containing all its virtue; and the oil is the vehicle of this most subtle part of the soul, or that which fixes and individuates it. And as, upon separation of this oil from the plant, the plant dies, so a second death, or death of the soul, ensues upon the resolution of this essential oil into its principles; as appears by leaving it exposed for some time to the open air, so that the volatile salt or spirit may fly off; after which the oil remains dead and insipid, but without any sensible diminution of its weight, by the loss of that volatile essence of the soul, that ethereal aura, that spark of entity, which returns and mixes with the solar light[66], the universal soul of the world, and only source of life, whether vegetable, animal, or intellectual; which differ only according to the grossness or fineness of the vehicles, and the different textures of the natural alembics, or, in other words, the organized bodies where the above-mentioned volatile essence inhabits and is elaborated, where it acts and is acted upon. This chemical system lets you at once into the nature of the soul, and accounts for all its phenomena. In that compound which is called man, the soul or essential oil is what commonly goes by the name of animal spirit: for, you must know it is a point agreed by chemists, that spirits are nothing but the

[65] Cf. *Siris*, especially sect. 8, 38, 42, 44—47, 59—61.

[66] Cf. *Siris*, e.g. sect. 43, 152, 162, 193, 194; also *First Letter to T— P— on the Virtues of Tar-Water*, sect. 16, 17, which unfold and adopt the ancient doctrine, that the solar-fire, or light, may be regarded as 'the animal spirit of this visible world,' diffused through the universe, and, according to Berkeley, the instrumental cause, under Supreme Intelligence, of all change in the macrocosm, or mundane system.

Siris passim, with its doctrine of an elementary fire medium, or animal spirit of the universe, which instrumentally connects all things, may be compared with this curious section in *Alciphron*.

more subtle oils. Now, in proportion as the essential oil of man is more subtle than that of other creatures, the volatile salt that impregnates it is more at liberty to act; which accounts for those specific properties and actions of human-kind, which distinguish them above other creatures. Hence you may learn why, among the wise[67] ancients, salt was another name for wit, and in our times a dull man is said to be insipid or insulse. Aromatic oils, maturated by great length of time, turn to salts: this shews why human-kind grow wiser by age. And what I have said of the twofold death or dissolution, first of the compound, by separating the soul from the organical body, and secondly of the soul itself, by dividing the volatile salt from the oil, illustrates and explains that notion of certain ancient philosophers—that, as the man was a compound of soul and body, so the soul was compounded of the mind or intellect, and its æthereal vehicle; and that the separation of soul and body, or death of the man, is, after a long tract of time, succeeded by a second death of the soul itself, to wit, the separation or deliverance of the intellect from its vehicle, and reunion with the sun.

Euph. O Lysicles! your ingenious friend has opened a new scene, and explained the most obscure and difficult points in the clearest and easiest manner.

Lys. I must own this account of things struck my fancy. I am no great lover of creeds or systems; but when a notion is reasonable and grounded on experience I know how to value it.

Cri. In good earnest, Lysicles, do you believe this account to be true?

Lys. Why then in good earnest I do not know whether I do or no. But I can assure you the ingenious artist himself has not the least doubt about it. And to believe an artist in his art is a just maxim and a short way to science.

Cri. But what relation hath the soul of man to chemic art? The same reason that bids me trust a skilful artist in his art inclines me to suspect him out of his art. Men are too apt to reduce unknown things to the standard of what they know, and bring a prejudice or tincture from things they have been conversant in, to judge thereby of things in which they have not been conversant.

[67] Berkeley's own reverence for ancient learning grew as his life advanced. Cf. Dial. VII., sect. 34; *Siris*, sect. 331–2, 350, and other passages in his later works.

I have known a fiddler gravely teach that the soul was harmony; a geometrician very positive that the soul must be extended; and a physician, who, having pickled half a dozen embryos, and dissected as many rats and frogs, grew conceited, and affirmed there was no soul at all, and that it was a vulgar error.

Lys. My notions sit easy. I shall not engage in pedantic disputes about them. They who do not like them may leave them.

Euph. This, I suppose, is said much like a gentleman.

15. But pray, Lysicles, tell me whether the clergy come within that general rule of yours, that an artist may be trusted in his art?

Lys. By no means.

Euph. Why so?

Lys. Because I take myself to know as much of those matters as they do.

Euph. But you allow that, in any other profession, one who had spent much time and pains may attain more knowledge than a man of equal or better parts who never made it his particular business.

Lys. I do.

Euph. And nevertheless in things religious and Divine you think all men equally knowing.

Lys. I do not say all men. But I think all men of sense competent judges.

Euph. What! are the Divine attributes and dispensations to mankind, the true end and happiness of rational creatures, with the means of improving and perfecting their beings, more easy and obvious points than those which make the subject of every common profession?

Lys. Perhaps not: but one thing I know, some things are so manifestly absurd that no authority shall make me give into them. For instance, if all mankind should pretend to persuade me that the Son of God was born upon earth in a poor family, was spit upon, buffeted, and crucified, lived like a beggar, and died like a thief, I should never believe one syllable of it. Common sense shews every one what figure it would be decent for an earthly prince or ambassador to make; and the Son of God, upon an embassy from heaven, must needs have made an appearance beyond all others of great eclat, and in all respects the very

reverse of that which Jesus Christ is reported to have made, even by His own historians.

Euph. O Lysicles! though I had ever so much mind to approve and applaud your ingenious reasoning, yet I dare not assent to this for fear of Crito.

Lys. Why so?

Euph. Because he observed just now, that men judge of things they do not know, by prejudices from things they do know. And I fear he would object that you, who have been conversant in the *grand monde*, having your head filled with a notion of attendants and equipage and liveries, the familiar badges of human grandeur, are less able to judge of that which is truly Divine; and that one who had seen less, and thought more, would be apt to imagine a pompous parade of worldly greatness not the most becoming the author of a spiritual religion, that was designed to wean men from the world, and raise them above it.

Cri. Do you think, Lysicles, if a man should make his entrance into London in a rich suit of clothes, with a hundred gilt coaches, and a thousand laced footmen; that this would be a more Divine appearance, and have more of true grandeur in it, than if he had power with a word to heal all manner of diseases, to raise the dead to life, and still the raging of the winds and the sea?

Lys. Without all doubt it must be very agreeable to common sense to suppose, that he could restore others to life who could not save his own. You tell us, indeed, that he rose again from the dead: but what occasion was there for him to die, the just for the unjust, the Son of God for wicked men? And why in that individual place? Why at that very time above all others? Why did he not make his appearance earlier, and preach in all parts of the world, that the benefit might have been more extensive [[68]and equal]? Account for all these points, and reconcile them, if you can, to the common notions and plain sense of mankind.

Cri. And what if those, as well as many other points, should lie out of the road that we are acquainted with; must we therefore explode them, and make it a rule to condemn every proceeding as senseless that doth not square with the vulgar sense of man? [[69]That, indeed, which evidently contradicts sense and reason you

[68] Added in second edition, and afterwards omitted.
[69] Ibid.

have a right to disbelieve. And when you are unjustly treated you have the same right to complain. But I think you should distinguish between matter of debt and matter of favour. Thus much is observed in all intercourse between man and man; wherein acts of mere benevolence are never insisted on, or examined and measured with the same accurate line as matters of justice. Who but a minute philosopher would, upon a gratuitous distribution of favours, inquire, why at this time, and not before? why to these persons, and not to others? Various are the natural abilities and opportunities of human-kind. How wide a difference is there in respect of the law of nature between one of our stupid ploughmen and a minute philosopher! between a Laplander and an Athenian! That conduct, therefore, which seems to you partial and unequal may be found as well in the dispensation of natural religion as of revealed. And, if so, why it should be made an objection against the one more than the other, I leave you to account.] If the precepts and certain primary tenets of religion appear in the eye of reason good and useful; and if they are also found to be so by their effects; we may, for the sake of them, admit certain other points or doctrines recommended with them to have a good tendency, to be right and true, although we cannot discern their goodness or truth by the mere light of human reason, which may well be supposed an insufficient judge of the proceedings, counsels, and designs of Providence—and this sufficeth to make our conviction reasonable.

16. It is an allowed point that no man can judge of this or that part of a machine taken by itself, without knowing the whole, the mutual relation or dependence of its parts, and the end for which it was made[70]. And, as this is a point acknowledged in corporeal and natural things, ought we not, by a parity of reason, to suspend our judgment of a single unaccountable part of the Divine economy, till we are more fully acquainted with the moral system, or world of spirits, and are let into the designs of God's Providence, and have an extensive view of His dispensations past, present, and future? Alas! Lysicles, what do you know even of yourself,

[70] So Butler's *Analogy*, pt. I. ch. 7.

whence you come, what you are, or whither you are going? To me it seems that a minute philosopher is like a conceited spectator, who never looked behind the scenes, and yet would judge of the machinery; who, from a transient glimpse of a part only of some one scene, would take upon him to censure the plot of a play.

Lys. As to the plot I will not say; but in half a scene a man may judge of an absurd actor. With what colour or pretext can you justify the vindictive, froward, whimsical behaviour of some inspired teachers or prophets? Particulars that serve neither for profit nor pleasure I make a shift to forget; but in general the truth of this charge I do very well remember.

Cri. You need be at no pains to prove a point I shall neither justify nor deny. That there have been human passions, infirmities, and defects, in persons inspired by God, I freely own; nay, that very wicked men have been inspired, as Balaam for instance and Caiaphas, cannot be denied. But what will you infer from thence? Can you prove it impossible that a weak or sinful man should become an instrument of the Spirit of God, for conveying His purpose to other sinners, or that Divine light may not, as well as the light of the sun, shine on a foul vessel without polluting its rays?

Lys. To make short work, the right way would be to put out our eyes[71], and not judge at all.

Cri. I do not say so; but I think it would be right, if some sanguine persons upon certain points suspected their own judgment.

Alc. But the very things said to be inspired, taken by themselves and in their own nature, are sometimes so wrong, to say no worse, that a man may pronounce them not to be Divine at first sight; without troubling his head about the system of Providence or connexion of events—as one may say that grass is green without knowing or considering how it grows, what uses it is subservient to, or how it is connected with the mundane system. Thus, for instance, the spoiling of the Egyptians, and the extirpa-

[71] 'He that takes away reason, to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both; and does muchwhat the same as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope.'—Locke, *Essay*, bk. IV. ch. 19, § 4.

tion of the Canaanites, every one at first glance sees to be cruel and unjust, and may therefore, without deliberating, pronounce them unworthy of God.

Cri. But, Alciphron, to judge rightly of these things, may it not be proper to consider how long the Israelites had wrought under those severe task-masters of Egypt, what injuries and hardships they had sustained from them, what crimes and abominations the Canaanites had been guilty of, what right God hath to dispose of the things of this world, to punish delinquents, and to appoint both the manner and the instruments of His justice? Man, who has not such right over his fellow-creatures, who is himself a fellow-sinner with them, who is liable to error as well as passion, whose views are imperfect, who is governed more by prejudice than the truth of things, may not improbably deceive himself, when he sets up for a judge of the proceedings of the holy, omniscient, impassive Creator and Governor of all things.

17. *Alc.* Believe me, Crito, men are never so industrious to deceive themselves, as when they engage to defend their prejudices. You would fain reason us out of all use of our reason. Can anything be more irrational? To forbid us to reason on the Divine dispensations is to suppose they will not bear the test of reason; or, in other words, that God acts without reason, which ought not to be admitted, no, not in any single instance. For if in one, why not in another? Whoever, therefore, allows a God must allow that he always acts reasonably. I will not therefore attribute to him actions and proceedings that are unreasonable. He hath given me reason to judge withal; and I will judge by that unerring light, lighted from the universal lamp of nature.

Cri. O Alciphron! as I frankly own the common remark to be true—that when a man is against reason, it is a shrewd sign reason is against him; so I should never go about to dissuade any one, much less one who so well knew the value of it, from using that noble talent. On the contrary, upon all subjects of moment, in my opinion, a man ought to use his reason: but then, whether it may not be reasonable to use it with some deference to superior reason, it will not perhaps be amiss to consider. [[72]He who hath

[72] Added in second edition, and afterwards omitted.

an exact view of the measure, and of the thing to be measured, if he applies the one to the other, may, I grant, measure exactly. But he who undertakes to measure, without knowing either, can be no more exact than he is modest. It may not, nevertheless, be impossible to find a man who, having neither an abstract idea of moral fitness, nor an adequate idea of the Divine economy, shall yet pretend to measure the one by the other.]

Alc. It must surely derogate from the wisdom of God, to suppose His conduct cannot bear being inspected, not even by the twilight of human reason.

Euph. You allow, then, God to be wise?

Alc. I do.

Euph. What! infinitely wise?

Alc. Even infinitely.

Euph. His wisdom, then, far exceeds that of man?

Alc. Vastly.

Euph. Probably more than the wisdom of man that of a child?

Alc. Without all question.

Euph. What think you, Alciphron, must not the conduct of a parent seem very unaccountable to a child, when its inclinations are thwarted, when it is put to learn the letters, when it is obliged to swallow bitter physic, to part with what it likes, and to suffer and do, and see, many things done contrary to its own judgment, however reasonable or agreeable to that of others?

Alc. This I grant.

Euph. Will it not therefore follow from hence, by a parity of reason, that the little child, *man*, when it takes upon it to judge of the schemes of parental Providence; and, a thing of yesterday, to criticise the economy of the Ancient of Days;—will it not follow, I say, that such a judge, of such matters, must be apt to make very erroneous judgments? esteeming those things in themselves unaccountable, which he cannot account for, and concluding of some certain points, from an appearance of arbitrary carriage towards him, which is suited to his infancy and ignorance, that they are in themselves capricious or absurd, and cannot proceed from a wise, just, and benevolent God. This single consideration, if duly attended to, would, I verily think, put an end to many conceited reasonings against revealed religion.

Alc. You would have us then conclude, that things, to our

wisdom unaccountable, may nevertheless proceed from an abyss of wisdom which our line cannot fathom; and that prospects viewed but in part, and by the broken, tinged light of our intellects, though to us they may seem disproportionate and monstrous, may nevertheless appear quite otherwise to another eye, and in a different situation: in a word, that as human wisdom is but childish folly, in respect of the Divine, so the wisdom of God may sometimes seem foolishness to man.

18. *Euph.* I would not have you make these conclusions, unless in reason you ought to make them: but, if they are reasonable, why should you not make them?

Alc. Some things may seem reasonable at one time and not at another: and I take this very apology you make, for credulity and superstition, to be one of those things. When I view it in its principles, it seems naturally to follow from just concessions; but, when I consider its consequences, I cannot agree to it. A man had as good abdicate his nature as disclaim the use of reason. A doctrine is unaccountable; therefore it must be Divine!

Euph. Credulity and superstition are qualities so disagreeable and degrading to human nature, so surely an effect of weakness, and so frequently a cause of wickedness, that I should be very much surprised to find a just course of reasoning lead to them. I can never think that reason is a blind guide to folly, or that there is any connexion between truth and falsehood, no more than I can think a thing's being unaccountable a proof that it is Divine. Though, at the same time, I cannot help acknowledging, it follows from your own avowed principles, that a thing's being unaccountable, or incomprehensible to our reason, is no sure argument to conclude it is not Divine; especially when there are collateral proofs of its being so. A child is influenced by the many sensible effects it hath felt of paternal love and care and superior wisdom, to believe and do several things with an implicit faith and obedience: and if we, in the same manner, from the truth and reasonableness which we plainly see in so many points within our cognizance, and the advantages which we experience from the seed of the gospel sown in good ground, were disposed to an implicit belief of certain other points, relating to schemes we do not know, or subjects to which our talents are perhaps dispro-

portionate, I am tempted to think it might become our duty, without dishonouring our reason; which is never so much dishonoured as when it is foiled, and never in more danger of being foiled than by judging where it hath neither means nor right to judge.

Lys. I would give a good deal to see that ingenious gamester Glaucus have the handling of Euphranor one night at our club. I own he is a peg too high for me in some of his notions. But then he is admirable at vindicating human reason against the impositions of priestcraft.

19. *Alc.* He would undertake to make it as clear as daylight, that there was nothing worth a straw in Christianity, but what every one knew, or might know, as well without as with it, before as since Jesus Christ.

Cri. That great man, it seems, teacheth, that common sense alone is the pole-star by which mankind ought to steer; and that what is called revelation must be ridiculous, because it is unnecessary and useless, the natural talents of every man being sufficient to make him happy, good, and wise, without any further correspondence from heaven either for light or aid[73].

Euph. I have already acknowledged how sensible I am, that my situation in this obscure corner of the country deprives me of many advantages, to be had from the conversation of ingenious men in town. To make myself some amends, I am obliged to converse with the dead and my own thoughts, which last I know are of little weight against the authority of Glaucus, or such-like great men in the minute philosophy. But what shall we say to Socrates[73], for he too was of an opinion very different from that ascribed to Glaucus?

Alc. For the present we need not insist on authorities, ancient or modern, or inquire which was the greater man, Socrates or Glaucus. Though, methinks, for so much as authority can signify, the present times, gray and hoary with age and experience, have a manifest advantage over those that are falsely called *ancient*[74]. But,

[73] So Collins; and also Tyndall, in his *Christianity as old as the Creation*, first published in 1730, when Berkeley was in Rhode Island. The latter part of Butler's *Analogy* was apparently directed against Tyndall.—For Socrates, see, among other places, the closing passages of the *Memo*, and in the *Symposium*.

[74] So Bacon, in various passages.

not to dwell on authorities, I tell you in plain English, Euphranor, we do not want your revelations; and that for this plain reason, those that are clear everybody knew before, and those that are obscure nobody is the better for.

Euph. [[75]As it is impossible that a man should believe the practic principles of the Christian religion, and not be the better for them; so, it is evident that those principles may be much more easily taught as points of faith than demonstrated or discovered as points of science. This I call evident, because it is a plain fact. Since we daily see that many are instructed in matters of faith; that few are taught by scientific demonstration; and that there are still fewer who can discover truth for themselves. Did minute philosophers but reflect, how rarely men are swayed or governed by mere ratiocination, and how often by faith, in the natural or civil concerns of the world! how little they know, and how much they believe! How uncommon is it to meet with a man who argues justly, who is in truth a master of reason, or walks by that rule! How much better (as the world goes) men are qualified to judge of facts than of reasonings, to receive truth upon testimony than to deduce it from principles! How general a spirit of trust or reliance runs through the whole system of life and opinion! And at the same time how seldom the dry light of unprejudiced nature is followed or to be found! I say did our thinking men but bethink themselves of these things, they would perhaps find it difficult to assign a good reason why *faith*, which hath so great a share in everything else, should yet have none in religion. But to come more closely to your point.] Whether it was possible for mankind to have known all parts of the Christian religion, besides mysteries and positive institutions, is not the question between us; and that they actually did not know them is too plain to be denied. This, perhaps, was for want of making a due use of reason. But, as to the usefulness of revelation, it seems much the same thing whether they could not know, or would not be at the pains to know, the doctrines revealed. And, as for those doctrines which were too obscure to penetrate, or too sublime to reach, by natural reason; how far mankind may be the better for them is more, I had almost said, than even you or Glaucus can tell.

[75] Introduced in second edition, and afterwards omitted in posthumous editions.

20. *Alc.* But, whatever may be pretended as to obscure doctrines and dispensations, all this hath nothing to do with prophecies; which, being altogether relative to mankind, and the events of this world, to which our faculties are surely well enough proportioned, one might expect should be very clear, and such as might inform instead of puzzling us.

Euph. And yet it must be allowed that, as some prophecies are clear, there are others very obscure: but, left to myself, I doubt I should never have inferred from thence that they were not Divine. In my own way of thinking, I should have been apt to conclude that the prophecies we understand are a proof for inspiration; but that those we do not understand are no proof against it. Inasmuch as for the latter our ignorance, or the reserve of the Holy Spirit may account; but for the other nothing, for aught that I see, can account but inspiration.

Alc. Now I know several sagacious men who conclude this very differently from you, to wit, that the one sort of prophecies is nonsense, and the other contrived after the events[76]. Behold the difference between a man of free thought and one of narrow principles!

Euph. It seems then they reject the Revelations because they are obscure, and Daniel's prophecies because they are clear.

Alc. Either way a man of sense sees cause to suspect there has been foul play.

Euph. Your men of sense are, it seems, hard to please.

Alc. Our philosophers are men of piercing eyes.

Euph. I suppose such men never make transient judgments from transient views, but always establish fixed conclusions upon a thorough inspection of things. For my own part, I dare not engage with a man who has examined those points so nicely as it may be presumed you have done; but I could name some eminent writers of our own, now living, whose books on the subject of prophecy have given great satisfaction to gentlemen who pass for men of sense and learning here in the country[77].

[76] Much attention was drawn to the biblical prophecies about the time this was written, among others, by Collins, in his sceptical *Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (1724), and in his *Scheme of Literal Prophecy considered* (1727). In the second of these works, the antiquity and authority of the book of Daniel is a special object of assault.

[77] e.g. Bishop Chandler's *Defence of Christianity, from the Prophecies of the Old*

Alc. You must know, Euphranor, I am not at leisure to peruse the learned writings of divines, on a subject which a man may see through with half an eye. To me it is sufficient, that the point itself is odd, and out of the road of nature[78]. For the rest, I leave them to dispute and settle among themselves, where to fix the precise time when the sceptre departed from Judah; or whether in Daniel's prophecy of the Messiah we should compute by the Chaldean or the Julian year. My only conclusion concerning all such matters is, that I will never trouble myself about them[78].

Euph. To an extraordinary genius, who sees things with half an eye, I know not what to say. But for the rest of mankind, one would think it very rash in them to conclude, without much and exact inquiry, on the unsafe side of a question which concerns their chief interest.

Alc. Mark it well: a true genius in pursuit of truth makes swift advances on the wings of general maxims, while little minds creep and grovel amidst mean particularities. I lay it down for a certain truth—that by the fallacious arts of logic and criticism, straining and forcing, palliating, patching, and distinguishing, a man may justify or make out anything; and this remark, with one or two about prejudice, saves me a world of trouble.

Euph. You, Alciphron, who soar sublime on strong and free opinions, vouchsafe to lend a helping hand to those whom you behold entangled in the birdlime of prejudice. For my part, I find it very possible to suppose prophecy may be Divine, although there should be some obscurity at this distance, with respect to dates of time or kinds of years. You yourself own revelation possible: and, allowing this, I can very easily conceive it may be odd, and out of the road of nature. I can, without amazement, meet in Holy Scripture divers prophecies, whereof I do not see the completion, divers texts I do not understand, divers mysteries above my comprehension, and ways of God to me unaccountable. Why may not some prophecies relate to parts of history I am not well enough acquainted with, or to events not yet come to pass? It seems to me that prophecies unfathomed by the hearer,

Testament (1725), and his *Vindication of the Defence* (1728); Dr. Samuel Chandler's *Vindication of the Christian Religion* (1725); Bishop Sherlock on the *Use and Intent of Prophecy* (1727); with many others. Sherlock was one of Berkeley's friends and admirers, and is said to have recommended *Alciphron* to Queen Caroline, when the author's sagacity was impugned.

[78] So Hume afterwards.

or even the speaker himself, have been afterward verified and understood in the event; and it is one of my maxims—that, *what hath been may be.* Though I rub mine eyes, and do my utmost to extricate myself from prejudice, yet it still seems very possible to me that, what I do not, a more acute, more attentive, or more learned man, may understand. At least thus much is plain: the difficulty of some points or passages doth not hinder the clearness of others; and those parts of Scripture which we cannot interpret, we are not bound to know the sense of. What evil or what inconvenience, if we cannot comprehend what we are not obliged to comprehend, or if we cannot account for those things which it doth not belong to us to account for? Scriptures not understood, at one time, or by one person, may be understood at another time, or by other persons. May we not perceive, by retrospect on what is past, a certain progress from darker to lighter, in the series of the Divine economy towards man? And may not future events clear up such points as at present exercise the faith of believers? Now, I cannot help thinking (such is the force either of truth or prejudice) that in all this there is nothing strained or forced, or which is not reasonable or natural to suppose.

21. *Alc.* Well, Euphranor, I will lend you a helping hand, since you desire it, but think fit to alter my method. For, you must know, the main points of Christian belief have been infused so early, and inculcated so often by nurses, pedagogues, and priests, that, be the proofs ever so plain, it is a hard matter to convince a mind, thus tinctured and stained, by arguing against revealed religion from its internal characters. I shall therefore set myself to consider things in another light, and examine your religion by certain external characters or circumstantials, comparing the system of revelation with collateral accounts of ancient heathen writers, and shewing how ill it consists with them. Know then that, the Christian revelation supposing the Jewish, it follows that, if the Jewish be destroyed, the Christian must of course fall to the ground. Now, to make short work, I shall attack this Jewish revelation in its head. Tell me, are we not obliged, if we believe the Mosaic account of things, to hold the world was created not quite six thousand years ago?

Euph. I grant we are[79].

Alc. What will you say now, if other ancient records carry up the history of the world many thousand years beyond this period? What if the Egyptians and Chinese have accounts extending to thirty or forty thousand years? What if the former of these nations have observed twelve hundred eclipses, during the space of forty-eight thousand years, before the time of Alexander the Great? What if the Chinese have also many observations antecedent to the Jewish account of the creation? What if the Chaldeans had been observing the stars for above four hundred thousand years? And what shall we say if we have successions of kings and their reigns, marked for several thousand years before the beginning of the world, assigned by Moses? Shall we reject the accounts and records of all other nations, the most famous, ancient, and learned in the world, and preserve a blind reverence for the legislator of the Jews?

Euph. And pray, if they deserve to be rejected, why should we not reject them? What if those monstrous chronologies contain nothing but names without actions, and manifest fables? What if those pretended observations of Egyptians and Chaldeans were unknown or unregarded by ancient astronomers? What if the Jesuits have shewn the inconsistency of the like Chinese pretensions with the truth of the Ephemerides? What if the most ancient Chinese observations allowed to be authentic are those of two fixed stars, one in the winter solstice, the other in the vernal equinox, in the reign of their king Yao, which was since the flood[80]?

Alc. You must give me leave to observe, the Romish missionaries are of small credit in this point.

Euph. But what knowledge have we, or can we have, of those Chinese affairs, but by their means? The same persons that tell us of these accounts refute them: if we reject their authority in one case, what right have we to build upon it in another?

Alc. When I consider that the Chinese have annals of more

[79] The revolution in the habitual cosmical conceptions since Berkeley wrote is here apparent, as well as in biblical exegesis. But our faith in the essential truth of Christianity is not now dependent upon the accidents of man's knowledge of the history of this globe, or upon physical discoveries.

[80] [Bianchini, *Histor. Univers.* cap. 17.] —Author. This learned Italian, born in 1662, formed the plan of a *Universal History*, founded on documentary and monumental materials supplied in part by Jesuit missionaries. The first part appeared at Rome in 1697. Bianchini died in 1729.

than forty thousand years, and that they are a learned, ingenious, and acute people, very curious, and addicted to arts and sciences, I profess I cannot help paying some regard to their accounts of time.

Euph. Whatever advantage their situation and political maxims may have given them, it doth not appear they are so learned or so acute in point of science as the Europeans. The general character of the Chinese, if we may believe Trigaltius and other writers, is, that they are men of a trifling and credulous curiosity, addicted to search after the philosopher's stone, and a medicine to make men immortal, to astrology, fortune-telling, and presages of all kinds. Their ignorance in nature and mathematics is evident, from the great hand the Jesuits make of that kind of knowledge among them. But what shall we think of those extraordinary annals, if the very Chinese themselves give no credit to them for more than three thousand years before Jesus Christ? if they do not pretend to have begun to write history above four thousand years ago? and if the oldest books they have now extant, in an intelligible character, are not above two thousand years old? One would think a man of your sagacity, so apt to suspect everything out of the common road of nature, should not, without the clearest proof, admit those annals for authentic, which record such strange things as the sun's not setting for ten days, and gold raining three days together. Tell me, Alciphron, can you really believe these things without inquiring by what means the tradition was preserved, through what hands it passed, or what reception it met with, or who first committed it to writing?

Alc. To omit the Chinese and their story, it will serve my purpose as well to build on the authority of Manetho[81], that learned Egyptian priest, who had such opportunities of searching into the most ancient accounts of time, and copying into his dynasties the most venerable and authentic records inscribed on the pillars of Hermes.

Euph. Pray, Alciphron, where were those chronological pillars to be seen?

Alc. In the Seriadical land.

[81] The most recent researches of Böckh, Bunsen, and others have tended to restore the credit of Manetho, whose annals, like those of Herodotus, are confirmed by modern archæology.

Euph. And where is that country?

Alc. I don't know.

Euph. How were those records preserved for so many ages down to the time of this Hermes, who is said to have been the first inventor of letters?

Alc. I do not know.

Euph. Did any other writers, before or since Manetho, pretend to have seen, or transcribed, or known anything about these pillars?

Alc. Not that I know.

Euph. Or about the place where they are said to have been?

Alc. If they did, it is more than I know.

Euph. Do the Greek authors that went into Egypt, and consulted the Egyptian priests, agree with these accounts of Manetho?

Alc. Suppose they do not.

Euph. Doth Diodorus, who lived since Manetho, follow, cite, or so much as mention this same Manetho?

Alc. What will you infer from all this?

Euph. If I did not know you and your principles, and how vigilantly you guard against imposture, I should infer that you were a very credulous man. For, what can we call it but credulity to believe most incredible things on most slender authority, such as fragments of an obscure writer, disagreeing with all other historians, supported by an obscure authority of Hermes' pillars, for which you must take his word, and which contain things so improbable as successions of gods and demi-gods, for many thousand years, Vulcan alone having reigned nine thousand? There is little in these venerable dynasties of Manetho besides names and numbers; and yet in that little we meet with very strange things, that would be thought romantic in another writer: for instance, the Nile overflowing with honey, the moon grown bigger, a speaking lamb, seventy kings who reigned as many days one after another, a king a day[82]. If you are known, Alciphron, to give credit to these things, I fear you will lose the honour of being thought incredulous.

Alc. And yet these ridiculous fragments, as you would represent

[82] [Scal. *Can. Isag.* lib. II.]—Author.

them, have been thought worth the pains and lucubrations of very learned men. How can you account for the work that the great Joseph Scaliger and Sir John Marsham[83] make about them?

Euph. I do not pretend to account for it. To see Scaliger add another Julian period to make room for such things as Manetho's dynasties, and Sir John Marsham take so much learned pains to piece, patch, and mend those obscure fragments, to range them in synchronisms, and try to adjust them with sacred chronology, or make them consistent with themselves and other accounts, is to me very strange and unaccountable. Why they, or Eusebius, or yourself, or any other learned man, should imagine those things deserve any regard I leave you to explain.

22. ***Alc.*** After all, it is not easy to conceive what should move, not only Manetho, but also other Egyptian priests, long before his time, to set up such great pretences to antiquity, all which, however differing from one another, agree in this, that they overthrow the Mosaic history. How can this be accounted for without some real foundation? What point of pleasure, or profit, or power could set men on forging successions of ancient names and periods of time for ages before the world began?

Euph. Pray, Alciphron, is there anything so strange or singular in this vain humour of extending the antiquity of nations beyond the truth? Hath it not been observed in most parts of the world? Doth it not even in our own times shew itself, especially among those dependent and subdued people who have little else to boast of? To pass over others of our fellow-subjects who, in proportion as they are below their neighbours in wealth and power, lay claim to a more remote antiquity; are not the pretensions of Irishmen in this way known to be very great? If I may trust my memory, O'Flaherty, in his Ogygia, mentions some transactions in Ireland before the flood. The same humour, and from the same cause, appears to have prevailed in Sicily, a country for some centuries past subject to the dominion of foreigners; during which time the Sicilians have published divers fabulous accounts, concerning the original and antiquity of their cities, wherein they vie with each other. It is pretended to be proved by ancient inscriptions, whose

[83] Sir John Marsham, an Egyptian archæologist, and one of the most eminent chronologists of the seventeenth century.

existence or authority seems on a level with that of Hermes' pillars, that Palermo was founded in the days of the patriarch Isaac by a colony of Hebrews, Phœnicians, and Syrians; and that a grandson of Esau had been governor of a tower subsisting within these two hundred years in that city[84]. The antiquity of Messina hath been carried still higher, by some who would have us think it was enlarged by Nimrod[85]. The like pretensions are made by Catania, and other towns of that island, who have found authors of as good credit as Manetho to support them. Now, I should be glad to know why the Egyptians, a subdued people, may not probably be supposed to have invented fabulous accounts from the same motive, and like others valued themselves on extravagant pretensions to antiquity, when in all other respects they were so much inferior to their masters? That people had been successively conquered by Ethiopians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Grecians, before it appears that those wonderful dynasties of Manetho and the pillars of Hermes were ever heard of; as they had been by the two first of those nations before the time of Solon himself, the earliest Greek that is known to have consulted the priests of Egypt—whose accounts were so extravagant that even the Greek historians, though unacquainted with Holy Scripture, were far from giving an entire credit to them. Herodotus, making a report upon their authority, saith, those to whom such things seem credible may make the best of them, for himself declaring that it was his purpose to write what he heard[86]. And both he and Diodorus do, on divers occasions, shew the same diffidence in the narratives of those Egyptian priests. And as we observed of the Egyptians, it is no less certain that the Phœnicians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans were each a conquered and reduced people, before the rest of the world appear to have heard anything of their pretensions to so remote antiquity.

Cri. But what occasion is there to be at any pains to account for

[84] [Fazelli, *Hist. Sicul.* decad. I. lib. VIII.]—Author. The *History of Sicily* by Tomaso Fazelli, written in the fifteenth century, was much esteemed by contemporary writers. Berkeley's associations with Italy and its islands appear in many of these references. Sicily in particular so attracted him that he prepared materials for a natural history of the island, which, with the journal of his tour there, were lost on the passage to Naples.

[85] [Reina, *Notizie Istoriche di Messina.*] —Author.

[86] [Herodotus in Euterpe.]—Author.

the humour of fabulous writers? Is it not sufficient to see that they relate absurdities; that they are unsupported by any foreign evidence; that they do not appear to have been in credit, even among their own countrymen; and that they are inconsistent one with another? That men should have the vanity to impose on the world by false accounts is nothing strange: it is much more so that, after what hath been done towards undeceiving the world by so many learned critics, there should be men found capable of being abused by those paltry scraps of Manetho, Berosus, Ctesias, or the like fabulous or counterfeit writers.

Alc. Give me leave to observe, those learned critics may prove to be ecclesiastics, perhaps some of them papists.

Cri. What do you think of Sir Isaac Newton, was he either a papist or ecclesiastic? Perhaps you may not allow him to have been in sagacity, or force of mind, equal to the great men of the minute philosophy; but it cannot be denied that he had read and thought much upon the subject, and that the result of his inquiry was a perfect contempt of all those celebrated rivals to Moses.

Alc. It hath been observed by ingenious men, that Sir Isaac Newton, though a layman, was deeply prejudiced: witness his great regard to the Bible.

Cri. And the same may be said of Mr. Locke, Mr. Boyle, Lord Bacon, and other famous laymen, who, however knowing in some points, must, nevertheless, be allowed not to have attained that keen discernment which is the peculiar distinction of your sect.

23. But perhaps there may be other reasons beside prejudice to incline a man to give Moses the preference; on the truth of whose history the government, manners, and religion of his country were founded and framed; of whose history there are manifest traces in the most ancient books and traditions of the gentiles, particularly of the Brachmans and Persees; whose history is confirmed by the late invention of arts and sciences, the gradual peopling of the world, the very names of ancient nations, and even by the authority and arguments of that renowned philosopher Lucretius, who, on other points, is so much admired and followed by those of your sect. Not to mention, that the continual decrease of fluids, the sinking

of hills, and the retardation[87] of planetary motions, afford so many natural proofs which shew this world had a beginning[87]; as the civil or historical proofs above mentioned do plainly point out this beginning to have been about the time assigned in Holy Scripture. After all which I beg leave to add one observation more. To any one who considers that, on digging into the earth, such quantities of shells, and, in some places, bones and horns of animals are found sound and entire, after having lain there in all probability some thousands of years; it should seem probable that gems, medals, and implements in metal and stone might have lasted entire, buried under the ground forty or fifty thousand years, if the world had been so old. How comes it then to pass that no remains are found, no antiquities of those numerous ages preceding the Scripture accounts of time; no fragments of buildings, no public monuments, no intaglias, cammeos, statues, basso-relievos, medals, inscriptions, utensils, or artificial works of any kind are ever discovered, which may bear testimony to the existence of those mighty empires, those successions of monarchs, heroes, and demi-gods, for so many thousand years? Let us look forward and suppose ten or twenty thousand years to come; during which time we will suppose that plagues, famines, wars, and earthquakes shall have made great havoc in the world;—is it not highly probable that, at the end of such a period, pillars, vases, and statues now in being, of granite, porphyry, or jasper

[87] 'retardation,'—'diminution' in the first edition.—This curious passage, in proof of the transient and arbitrary character of this planet and solar system, was perhaps suggested by some of Newton's or Boyle's speculations, or by those of Leibnitz. 'It is evident,' says Newton, in a passage thus translated from his *Optics*, in Dr. Samuel Clarke's *Third Reply* to Leibnitz, 'that motion can on the whole both increase and diminish. But, because of the tenacity of fluid bodies, and the attrition of their parts, and the weakness of elastic force in solid bodies—motion is, in the nature of things, always more apt to diminish than to increase. . . . Since, therefore, all the various motions that are in the world are perpetually decreasing; it is absolutely necessary, in order to preserve and renew those motions, that we have recourse to some active principles.'—(*Correspondence between Leibnitz and Clarke, in* 1715 *and* 1716, *relating to the Principles of Natural Philosophy and Religion*, p. 87.) 'The active forces which are in the universe,' Clarke remarks, 'diminishing themselves so as to stand in need of new impressions, is no inconvenience, no disorder, no imperfection in the workmanship of the universe, but is the consequence of the nature of *dependent* things.' (pp. 85, 87.) 'The present frame of the solar system (for instance) according to the present laws of motion, will in time fall into confusion; and perhaps after that will be amended, or put into a new form. But this amendment is only relative with regard to our conceptions. In reality, and with regard to God, the present frames and the consequent disorder, and the following renovation are all equally parts of the design framed in God's original perfect idea.' (pp. 45, 47.) Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 19, 32, 36, and see the *Protogæa* of Leibnitz. Berkeley was fond of cosmical speculations.

(stones of such hardness as we know them to have lasted two thousand years above ground, without any considerable alteration), would bear record of these and past ages? Or, that some of our current coins might then be dug up, or old walls, and the foundations of buildings shew themselves, as well as the shells and stones of the primeval world are preserved down to our times? To me it seems to follow from these considerations, which common sense and experience make all men judges of, that we may see good reason to conclude, the world was created about the time recorded in Holy Scripture. And if we admit a thing so extraordinary as the creation of this world, it should seem that we admit something strange, and odd, and new to human apprehension, beyond any other miracle whatsoever.

24. Alciphron sat musing and made no answer.

Whereupon Lysicles expressed himself in the following manner:— I must own I should rather suppose with Lucretius, that the world was made by chance, and that men grew out of the earth, like pompions, than pin my faith on those wretched fabulous fragments of Oriental history. And as for the learned men who have taken pains to illustrate and piece them together, they appear to me no better than so many musty pedants. An ingenious free-thinker may perhaps now and then make some use of their lucubrations, and play one absurdity against another. But you are not therefore to think he pays any real regard to the authority of such apocryphal writers, or believes one syllable of the Chinese, Babylonian, or Egyptian traditions. If we seem to give them a preference before the Bible, it is only because they are not established by law. This is my plain sense of the matter, and I dare say it is the general sense of our sect; who are too rational to be in earnest on such trifles, though they sometimes give hints of deep erudition, and put on a grave face to divert themselves with bigots.

Alc. Since Lysicles will have it so, I am content not to build on accounts of time preceding the Mosaic. I must nevertheless beg leave to observe, there is another point of a different nature, against which there do not lie the same exceptions, that deserves to be considered, and may serve our purpose as well. I presume it will be allowed that historians, treating of times within the

Mosaic account, ought by impartial men to be placed on the same foot with Moses. It may therefore be expected that those who pretend to vindicate his writings should reconcile them with parallel accounts of other authors, treating of the same times, things, and persons. And, if we are not attached singly to Moses, but take our notions from other writers, and the probability of things, we shall see good cause to believe the Jews were only a crew of leprous Egyptians, driven from their country on account of that loathsome distemper; and that their religion, pretended to have been delivered from Heaven at Mount Sinai, was in truth learned in Egypt, and brought from thence.

Cri. Not to insist on what cannot be denied, that an historian writing of his own times is to be believed before others who treat of the same subject several ages after, it seems to me that it is absurd to expect that we should reconcile Moses with profane historians, till you have first reconciled them one with another. In answer, therefore, to what you observe, I desire you would consider, in the first place, that Manetho, Chæremon, and Lysimachus had published inconsistent accounts of the Jews, and their going forth from Egypt[88]: in the second place, that their language is a plain proof they were not of Egyptian, but either of Phœnician, of Syrian, or of Chaldean original: and, in the third place, that it doth not seem very probable to suppose their religion, the basis or fundamental principle of which was the worship of one supreme God, and the principal design of which was to abolish idolatry, could be derived from Egypt, the most idolatrous of all nations. It must be owned, the separate situation and institutions of the Jews occasioned their being treated by some foreigners with great ignorance and contempt of them and their original. But Strabo, who is allowed to have been a judicious and inquisitive writer, though he was not acquainted with their true history, makes more honourable mention of them. He relates that Moses, with many other worshippers of one infinite God, not approving the image-worship of the Egyptians and other nations, went out from Egypt and settled at Jerusalem, where they built a temple to one only God without images[89].

25. *Alc.* We who assert the cause of liberty against religion, in

[88] [Joseph. *Contra Apion.* lib. I.]—Author.

[89] [Strab. lib. XVI.]—Author.

these later ages of the world, lie under great disadvantages, from the loss of ancient books, which cleared up many points to the eyes of those great men, Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, which at a greater distance and with less help cannot be so easily made out by us: but, had we those records, I doubt not we might demolish the whole system at once.

Cri. And yet I make some doubt of this; because those great men, as you call them, with all those advantages, could not do it.

Alc. That must needs have been owing to the dulness and stupidity of the world in those days, when the art of reasoning was not so much known and cultivated as of late. But those men of true genius saw through the deceit themselves, and were very clear in their opinion, which convinces me they had good reason on their side.

Cri. And yet that great man Celsus seems to have had very slight and inconstant notions: one while, he talks like a thorough Epicurean; another, he admits miracles, prophecies, and a future state of rewards and punishments. What think you, Alciphron, is it not something capricious in so great a man, among other advantages which he ascribes to brutes above human-kind, to suppose they are magicians and prophets; that they have a nearer commerce and union with the Divinity; that they know more of men; and that elephants, in particular, are of all others most religious animals and strict observers of an oath[90].

Alc. A great genius will be sometimes whimsical. But what do you say to the Emperor Julian? was he not an extraordinary man?

Cri. He seems by his writings to have been lively and satirical. Further, I make no difficulty of owning that he was a generous, temperate, gallant, and facetious emperor. But at the same time it must be allowed, because his own heathen panegyrist Ammianus Marcellinus[91] allows it, that he was a prating, light, vain, superstitious sort of man. And therefore his judgment or authority can be of but small weight with those who are not prejudiced in his favour.

Alc. But of all the great men who wrote against revealed

[90] [Origen *Contra Celsum*, lib. IV.]—AUTHOR.
[91] [Am. Marcellin. lib. XXV.]—AUTHOR.

religion, the greatest without question was that truly great man Porphyry, the loss of whose invaluable work can never be sufficiently lamented. This profound philosopher went to the bottom and original of things. He most learnedly confuted the Scriptures, shewed the absurdity of the Mosaic accounts, undermined and exposed the prophecies, and ridiculed allegorical interpretations[92]. The moderns, it must be owned, have done great things, and shewn themselves able men; yet I cannot but regret the loss of what was done by a person of such vast abilities, and who lived so much nearer the fountain-head; though his authority survives his writings, and must still have its weight with impartial men, in spite of the enemies of truth.

Cri. Porphyry, I grant, was a thorough infidel, though he appears by no means to have been incredulous. It seems he had a great opinion of wizards and necromancers, and believed the mysteries, miracles, and prophecies of Theurgists and Egyptian priests. He was far from being an enemy to obscure jargon; and pretended to extraordinary ecstacies. In a word, this great man appears to have been as unintelligible as a schoolman, as superstitious as a monk, and as fanatical as any Quietist or Quaker; and, to complete his character as a minute philosopher, he was under strong temptations to lay violent hands on himself. We may frame a notion of this patriarch of infidelity by his judicious way of thinking upon other points as well as the Christian religion. So sagacious was he as to find out that the souls of insects, when separated from their bodies, became rational: that demons of a thousand shapes assist in making philtrums and charms, whose spiritual bodies are nourished and fattened by the steams of libations and sacrifices: that the ghosts of those who died violent deaths used to haunt and appear about their sepulchres. This same egregious philosopher adviseth a wise man not to eat flesh, lest the impure soul of the brute that was put to violent death should enter, along with the flesh, into those who eat it. He adds, as a matter of fact confirmed by many experiments, that those who would insinuate into themselves the souls of such animals as have the

[92] [Luc. Holstenius, *De Vita et Scriptis Porphyrii.*]—AUTHOR. Holstenius was an eminent German scholar of the seventeenth century, who renounced Protestantism, as it is said, in consequence of studying Plato and the Fathers. He removed to Italy, was librarian of Cardinal Barbarini, annotated various ancient writers, and died at Rome in 1661.

gift of foretelling things to come, need only eat a principal part, the heart, for instance, of a stag or a mole, and so receive the soul of the animal, which will prophesy in them like a god[93]. No wonder if men whose minds were preoccupied by faith and tenets of such a peculiar kind should be averse from the reception of the gospel. Upon the whole, we desire to be excused if we do not pay the same deference to the judgment of men that appear to us whimsical, superstitious, weak, and visionary, which those impartial gentlemen do, who admire their talents, and are proud to tread in their footsteps.

Alc. Men see things in different views: what one admires another contemns: it is even possible for a prejudiced mind, whose attention is turned towards the faults and blemishes of things, to fancy some shadow of defect in those great lights which in our own days have enlightened, and still continue to enlighten, the world.

26. But pray tell me, Crito, what you think of Josephus. He is allowed to have been a man of learning and judgment. He was himself an assertor of revealed religion. And Christians, when his authority serves their turn, are used to cite him with respect.

Cri. All this I acknowledge.

Alc. Must it not then seem very strange, and very suspicious to every impartial inquirer, that this learned Jew, writing the history of his own country, of that very place, and those very times, where and when Jesus Christ made His appearance, should yet say nothing of the character, miracles, and doctrine of that extraordinary person? Some ancient Christians were so sensible of this that, to make amends, they inserted a famous passage[94] in that historian; which imposture hath been sufficiently detected by able critics in the last age.

Cri. Though there are not wanting able critics on the other side of the question, yet, not to enter upon the discussion of that celebrated passage, I am content to give you all you can desire, and suppose it not genuine, but the pious fraud of some wrong-

[93] [Vide Porphyrium *De Abstinentia, De Sacrificiis, De Diis et Dæmonibus.*] — AUTHOR.

[94] Josephus, *Ant.* lib. XVIII. cap. 3, where the life, miracles, and resurrection of Christ are referred to.

headed Christian, who could not brook the omission in Josephus. But this will never make such omission a real objection against Christianity. Nor is there, for aught I can see, anything in it whereon to ground either admiration or suspicion; inasmuch as it should seem very natural, supposing the gospel account exactly true, for Josephus to have said nothing of it; considering that the view of that writer was to give his country some figure in the eye of the world, which had been greatly prejudiced against the Jews and knew little of their history, to which end the life and death of our Saviour would not in any wise have conduced; considering that Josephus could not have been an eye-witness of our Saviour or His miracles; considering that he was a Pharisee of quality and learning, foreign as well as Jewish, one of great employment in the state, and that the gospel was preached to the poor; that the first instruments of spreading it and the first converts to it were mean and illiterate, that it might not seem the work of man, or beholden to human interest or power; considering the general prejudice of the Jews, who expected in the Messiah a temporal and conquering prince; which prejudice was so strong, that they chose rather to attribute our Saviour's miracles to the devil, than acknowledge Him to be the Christ: considering also the hellish disorder and confusion of the Jewish state in the days of Josephus, when men's minds were filled and astonished with unparalleled wars, dissensions, massacres, and seditions of that devoted people. Laying all these things together, I do not think it strange that such a man, writing with such a view, at such a time, and in such circumstances, should omit to describe our blessed Saviour's life and death, or to mention His miracles, or to take notice of the state of the Christian church, which was then as a grain of mustard-seed beginning to take root and germinate. And this will seem still less strange, if it be considered that the apostles in a few years after our Saviour's death departed from Jerusalem, setting themselves to convert the gentiles, and were dispersed throughout the world; that the converts in Jerusalem were, not only of the meanest of the people, but also few; the three thousand added to the church in one day upon Peter's preaching in that city, appearing to have been not inhabitants but strangers from all parts assembled to celebrate the feast of Pentecost; and that all the time of Josephus and for several years after, during a succes-

sion of fifteen bishops, the Christians at Jerusalem observed the Mosaic law[95], and were, consequently, in outward appearance, one people with the rest of the Jews, which must have made them less observable. I would fain know what reason we have to suppose that the gospel, which in its first propagation seemed to overlook the great or considerable men of this world, might not also have been overlooked by them, as a thing not suited to their apprehensions and way of thinking? Besides, in those early times might not other learned Jews, as well as Gamaliel[96], suspend their judgment of this new way, as not knowing what to make or say of it, being on one hand unable to quit the notions and traditions in which they were brought up, and, on the other, not daring to resist or speak against the gospel, lest they should be found to fight against God? Surely at all events, it could never be expected that an unconverted Jew should give the same account of the life, miracles, and doctrine of Jesus Christ as might become a Christian to have given; nor, on the other hand, was it at all improbable that a man of sense should beware to lessen or traduce what, for aught he knew, might have been a heavenly dispensation: between which two courses the middle was to say nothing, but pass it over in a doubtful or a respectful silence. And it is observable that where this historian occasionally mentions Jesus Christ, in his account of St. James's death, he doth it without any reflection, or saying either good or bad, though at the same time he shews a regard for the apostle. It is observable, I say, that, speaking of Jesus, his expression is, 'who was called the Christ,' not who pretended to be the Christ, or who was falsely called the Christ, but simply τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ[97]. It is evident Josephus knew there was such a man as Jesus, and that He was said to be the Christ, and yet he condemns neither him nor his followers; which to me seems an argument in their favour. Certainly if we suppose Josephus to have known or been persuaded that He was an impostor, it will be difficult to account for his not saying so in plain terms. But, if we suppose him in Gamaliel's way of thinking, who suspended his judgment, and was afraid of being found to fight against God, it should seem natural for him

[95] [Sulp. Sever. *Sacr. Hist.*, lib. II., et Euseb. *Chron.* lib. poster.]—AUTHOR.

[96] [Acts v.]—AUTHOR.

[97] [Josephus, *Ant.* lib. XX. cap. 8.]—AUTHOR.

to behave in that very manner which according to you makes against our faith, but I verily think makes for it. But what if Josephus had been a bigot, or even a Sadducee, an infidel, an atheist? What then! we readily grant there might have been persons of rank, politicians, generals, and men of letters, then as well as now, Jews as well as Englishmen, who believed no revealed religion; and that some such persons might possibly have heard of a man in low life, who performed miracles by magic, without informing themselves, or perhaps ever inquiring, about his mission and doctrine. Upon the whole, I cannot comprehend why any man should conclude against the truth of the gospel from Josephus's omitting to speak of it, any more than from his omitting to embrace it. Had the first Christians been chief-priests and rulers, or men of science and learning, like Philo and Josephus, it might perhaps with better colour have been objected that their religion was of human contrivance, than now that it hath pleased God by weak things to confound the strong. This I think sufficiently accounts, why in the beginning the gospel might overlook or be overlooked by men of a certain rank and character.

27. *Alc.* And yet it seems an odd argument in proof of any doctrine, that it was preached by simple people to simple people.

Cri. Indeed if there was no other attestation to the truth of the Christian religion, this must be owned a very weak one. But if a doctrine begun by instruments, mean as to all human advantages, and making its first progress among those who had neither wealth, nor art, nor power to grace or encourage it, should in a short time, by its own innate excellency, the mighty force of miracles, and the demonstration of the Spirit, not only without but against all worldly motives, spread through the world, and subdue men of all ranks and conditions of life, would it not be very unreasonable to reject or suspect it, for the want of human means? And might not this with much better reason be thought an argument of its coming from God?

Alc. But still an inquisitive man will want the testimony of men of learning and knowledge.

Cri. But, from the first century onwards, there was never wanting the testimony of such men, who wrote learnedly in defence of the Christian religion, who lived, many of them, when the memory of

things was fresh, who had abilities to judge and means to know, and who gave the clearest proofs of their conviction and sincerity.

Alc. But all the while these men were Christians, prejudiced Christians, and therefore their testimony is to be suspected.

Cri. It seems then you would have Jews or heathens attest to the truths of Christianity?

Alc. That is the very thing I want.

Cri. But how can this be? Or, if it could, would not any rational man be apt to suspect such evidence, and ask how it was possible for a man really to believe such things himself and not become a Christian? The apostles and first converts were themselves Jews, and brought up in a veneration for the law of Moses, and in all the prejudices of that people: many Fathers, Christian philosophers, and learned apologists for the faith, who had been bred gentiles, were without doubt imbued with prejudices of education: and if the finger of God and force of truth converted both the one and the other from Judaism or gentileism, in spite of their prejudices to Christianity, is not their testimony so much the stronger? You have then the suffrages of both Jews and gentiles, attesting to the truth of our religion in the earliest ages. But to expect or desire the attestation of Jews remaining Jews, or of gentiles remaining gentiles, seems unreasonable: nor can it be imagined that the testimony of men, who were not converted themselves, should be the likeliest to convert others. We have indeed the testimony of heathen writers to prove—that about the time of our Saviour's birth there was a general expectation in the east of a Messiah or Prince, who should found a new dominion: that there were such people as Christians: that they were cruelly persecuted and put to death: that they were innocent and holy in life and worship: and that there did really exist in that time certain persons and facts mentioned in the New Testament. And for other points, we have learned Fathers, several of whom had been, as I have already observed, bred heathens, to attest their truth.

Alc. For my part, I have no great opinion of the capacity or learning of the Fathers, and many learned men, especially of the reformed churches abroad, are of the same mind, which saves me the trouble of looking myself into their voluminous writings.

Cri. I shall not take upon me to say, with the minute philosopher Pomponatius[98], that Origen, Basil, Augustin, and divers other Fathers, were equal to Plato, Aristotle, and the greatest of the gentiles in human knowledge. But, if I may be allowed to make a judgment from what I have seen of their writings, I should think several of them men of great parts, eloquence, and learning, and much superior to those who seem to undervalue them. Without any affront to certain modern critics or translators, Erasmus may be allowed a man of fine taste, and a fit judge of sense and good writing, though his judgment in this point was very different from theirs. Some of our reformed brethren, because the Romanists attribute too much, seem to have attributed too little to them, from a very usual, though no very judicious, opposition; which is apt to lead men to remark defects, without making proper allowances, and to say things which neither piety, candour, nor good sense require them to say.

28. *Alc.* But, though I should acknowledge that a concurring testimony of many learned and able men throughout the first ages of Christianity may have its weight, yet when I consider the great number of forgeries and heresies that sprung up in those times, it very much weakens their credit.

Cri. Pray, Alciphron, would it be allowed a good argument in the mouth of a papist against the Reformation, that many absurd sects sprung up at the same time with it? Are we to wonder that, when good seed is sowing, the enemy should sow tares? But at once to cut off several objections, let us suppose in fact, what you do not deny possible, that there is a God, a devil, and a revelation from heaven committed to writing many centuries ago. Do but take a view of human nature, and consider what would probably follow from such a supposition; and whether it is not very likely there should be half-believers, mistaken bigots, holy frauds, ambitious, interested, disputing, conceited, schismatical, heretical, absurd men among the professors of such revealed religion; as well as, after a course of ages, various readings, omissions, transpositions, and obscurities in the text of the sacred oracles? And

[98] [Lib. *De Immortalitate Animæ.*]—AUTHOR. Pomponatius was a bold Italian thinker, who powerfully affected opinion in the early part of the sixteenth century. While he was a free inquirer and sceptic in philosophy, it does not appear that this interesting personage was an unbeliever in religion.

if so, I leave you to judge whether it be reasonable to make those events an objection against the being of a thing which would probably and naturally follow upon the supposal of its being?

Alc. After all, say what you will, this variety of opinions must needs shake the faith of a reasonable man. Where there are so many different opinions on the same point it is very certain they cannot all be true, but it is certain they may all be false. And the means to find out the truth! When a man of sense sets about this inquiry, he finds himself on a sudden startled and amused with hard words and knotty questions. This makes him abandon the pursuit, thinking the game not worth the chase.

Cri. But would not this man of sense do well to consider, it must argue want of discernment to reject Divine truths for the sake of human follies? Use but the same candour and impartiality in treating of religion that you would think proper on other subjects. We desire no more, and expect no less. In law, in physic, in politics, wherever men have refined, is it not evident they have been always apt to run into disputes and chicane? But will that hinder you from admitting there are many good rules, and just notions, and useful truths in all those professions? Physicians may dispute, perhaps vainly and unintelligibly, about the animal system: they may assign different causes of distempers, some explaining them by the elementary qualities, hot and cold, moist and dry: yet this doth not hinder but the bark may be good for an ague, and rhubarb for a flux. Nor can it be inferred from the different sects which from time to time have sprung up in that profession, the dogmatic, for instance, empiric, methodic, Galenic, Paracelsian, or the hard words and knotty questions and idle theories which have grown from them, or been engrafted on them, that, therefore, we should deny the circulation of the blood, or reject their excellent rules about exercise, air, and diet.

Alc. It seems you would screen religion by the example of other professions, all which have produced sects and disputes as well as Christianity; which may in itself be true and useful, notwithstanding many false and fruitless notions engrafted on it by the wit of man. Certainly if this had been observed or believed by many acute reasoners, they would never have made the multiplicity of religious opinions and controversies an argument against religion in general.

Cri. How such an obvious truth should escape men of sense and inquiry I leave you to account: but I can very easily account for gross mistakes in those who pass for free-thinkers without ever thinking; or, if they do think, whose meditations are employed on other points of a very different nature from a serious and impartial inquiry about religion.

29. But to return: what or where is the profession of men, who never split into schisms, or never talk nonsense? Is it not evident that out of all the kinds of knowledge on which the human mind is employed there grow certain excrescences, which may be pared off, like the clippings of hair or nails in the body, and with no worse consequence? Whatever bigots or enthusiasts, whatever notional or scholastic divines may say or think, it is certain the faith derived from Christ and His apostles was not a piece of empty sophistry: they did not deliver and transmit down to us *κενὴν ἀπάτην*, but *γυμνὴν γνώμην*, to use the expression of a holy confessor[99]. And to pretend to demolish their foundation for the sake of human superstructure, be it hay or stubble or what it will, is no argument of just thought or reason; any more than it is of fairness to suppose a doubtful sense fixed, and argue from one side of the question in disputed points. Whether, for instance, the beginning of Genesis is to be understood in a literal or allegorical sense? Whether the book of Job be a history or a parable? Being points disputed between Christians, an infidel can have no right to argue from one side of the question in those or the like cases. This or that tenet of a sect, this or that controverted notion, is not what we contend for at present, but the General Faith taught by Christ and His apostles, and preserved by universal and perpetual tradition in all the churches down to our own times. To tax or strike at this Divine Doctrine, on account of things foreign and adventitious, the speculations and disputes of curious men, is in my mind an absurdity of the same kind as it would be to cut down a fine tree, yielding fruit and shade, because its leaves afforded nourishment to caterpillars, or because spiders may now and then weave cobwebs among the branches.

Alc. To divide and distinguish would take time. We have

[99] [Socr. *Histor. Eccles.* lib. I.]—Author.

several gentlemen very capable of judging in the gross, but that want attention for irksome and dry studies, or minute inquiries. To which, as it would be very hard to oblige men against their will, so it must be a great wrong to the world, as well as themselves, to debar them from the right of deciding according to their natural sense of things.

Cri. It were to be wished those capable men would employ their judgment and attention on the same objects. If theological inquiries are unpalatable, the field of nature is wide. How many discoveries are to be made! How many errors to be corrected in arts and sciences! How many vices to be reformed in life and manners! Why do men single out such points as are innocent and useful, when there are so many pernicious mistakes to be amended? Why set themselves to destroy the hopes of human kind and encouragements to virtue? Why delight to judge where they disdain to inquire? Why not employ their noble talents on the longitude or perpetual motion?

Alc. I wonder you should not see the difference between points of curiosity and religion. Those employ only men of a genius or humour suited to them. But all mankind have a right to censure, and are concerned to judge of these; except they will blindly submit to be governed by the stale wisdom of their ancestors, and the established laws of their country.

Cri. It should seem, if they are concerned to judge, they are not less concerned to examine before they judge.

Alc. But after all the examination and inquiry that mortal man can make about Revealed Religion, it is impossible to come at any rational sure footing.

30. There is, indeed, a deal of specious talk about faith founded upon miracles. But when I examine this matter thoroughly, and trace Christian faith up to its original, I find it rests upon much darkness, and scruple, and uncertainty. Instead of points evident or agreeable to human reason, I find a wonderful narrative of the Son of God tempted in the wilderness by the devil, a thing utterly unaccountable, without any end, or use, or reason whatsoever. I meet with strange histories of apparitions of angels, and voices from heaven, with surprising accounts of demoniacs, things quite out of the road of common sense and observation, with several

incredible feats said to have been done by Divine power, but more probably the inventions of men: nor the less likely to be so, because I cannot pretend to say with what view they were invented. Designs deeply laid are dark, and the less we know the more we suspect: but, admitting them for true, I shall not allow them to be miraculous, until I thoroughly know the power of what are called second causes, and the force of Magic.

Cri. You seem, Alciphron, to analyse, not faith, but infidelity, and trace it to its principles; which, from your own account, I collect to be dark and doubtful scruples and surmises, hastiness in judging, and narrowness in thinking, grounded on a fanciful notion which overrates the little scantling of your own experience, and on real ignorance of the views of Providence, and of the qualities, operations, and mutual respects of the several kinds of beings which are, or may be, for aught you know, in the universe. Thus obscure, uncertain, conceited, and conjectural are the principles of infidelity. Whereas, on the other hand, the principles of faith seem to be points plain and clear. It is a clear point that this faith in Christ was spread abroad throughout the world soon after his death. It is a clear point that this was not effected by human learning, politics, or power. It is a clear point that in the early times of the church there were several men of knowledge and integrity, who embraced this faith not from any, but against all, temporal motives. It is a clear point that, the nearer they were to the fountain-head, the more opportunity they had to satisfy themselves as to the truth of those facts which they believed. It is a clear point that the less interest there was to persuade, the more need there was of evidence to convince them. It is a clear point that they relied on the authority of those who declared themselves eye-witnesses of the miracles and resurrection of Christ. It is a clear point that those professed eye-witnesses suffered much for this their attestation, and finally sealed it with their blood. It is a clear point that these witnesses, weak and contemptible as they were, overcame the world, spread more light, preached purer models, and did more benefit to mankind than all the philosophers and sages put together.

These points appear to me clear and sure, and, being allowed such, they are plain, just, and reasonable motives of assent; they stand upon no fallacious ground, they contain nothing beyond our

sphere, neither supposing more knowledge nor other faculties than we are really masters of; and, if they should not be admitted for morally certain, as I believe they will by fair and unprejudiced inquirers, yet the allowing them to be only probable is sufficient to stop the mouth of an infidel. These plain points, I say, are the pillars of our faith, and not those obscure ones by you supposed; which are in truth the unsound uncertain principles of infidelity, to a rash, prejudiced, and assuming spirit. To raise an argument or answer an objection from hidden powers of Nature or Magic is groping in the dark; but, by the evident light of sense, men might be sufficiently certified of sensible effects and matters of fact, such as the miracles and resurrection of Christ; and the testimony of such men may be transmitted to after ages, with the same moral certainty as other historical narrations; and those same miraculous facts, compared by reason with the doctrines they were brought to prove, do afford to an unbiassed mind strong indications of their coming from God, or a superior principle, whose Goodness retrieved the moral world, whose Power commanded the natural, and whose Providence extended over both. Give me leave to say that nothing dark, nothing incomprehensible, or mysterious, or unaccountable, is the ground or motive, the principle or foundation, the proof or reason of our faith although it may be the object of it. For, it must be owned that, if by clear and sure principles we are rationally led to believe a point less clear, we do not therefore reject such point because it is mysterious to conceive, or difficult to account for; nor would it be right so to do. As for Jews and gentiles anciently attributing our Saviour's miracles to Magic, this is so far from being a proof against them that to me it seems rather a proof of the facts, without disproving the cause to which we ascribe them. As we do not pretend to know the nature and operations of demons, the history, laws, and system of rational beings, and the schemes or views of Providence, so far as to account for every action and appearance recorded in the gospel; so neither do you know enough of those things to be able, from that knowledge of yours, to object against accounts so well attested. It is an easy matter to raise scruples upon many authentic parts of civil history, which, requiring a more perfect knowledge of facts, circumstances, and councils than we can come at to explain them, must be to us inexplicable. And this is still more easy with

respect to the history of Nature, in which, if surmises were admitted for proofs against things odd, strange, and unaccountable; if our scanty experience were made the rule and measure of truth, and all those phenomena rejected, that we, through ignorance of the principles, and laws, and system of nature, could not explain, we should indeed make discoveries, but it would be only of our own blindness and presumption. And why men that are so easily and so often gravelled in common points, in things natural and visible, should yet be so sharp-sighted and dogmatical about the invisible world and its mysteries is to me a point utterly unaccountable by all the rules of logic and good sense. Upon the whole, therefore, I cannot help thinking there are points sufficiently plain, and clear, and full, whereon a man may ground a reasonable faith in Christ: but that the attacks of minute philosophers against this faith are grounded upon darkness, ignorance, and presumption.

Alc. I doubt I shall still remain in the dark as to the proofs of the Christian religion, and always presume there is nothing in them.

31. For, how is it possible, at this remote distance, to arrive at any knowledge, or frame any demonstration about it?

Cri. What then? Knowledge, I grant, in a strict sense, cannot be had without evidence or demonstration: but probable[100] arguments are a sufficient ground of faith. Who ever supposed that scientifical proofs were necessary to make a Christian? Faith alone is required; and, provided that, in the main and upon the whole, men are persuaded, this saving faith may consist with some degrees of obscurity, scruple, and error. For, although the light of truth be unchangeable, and the same in its eternal source, the Father of Lights: yet, with respect to us, it is variously weakened and obscured, by passing through a long distance or gross medium[1], where it is intercepted, distorted, or tinctured, by the prejudices and passions of men. But, all this notwithstanding, he that will

[100] In this and the next section, the broad characteristics of Faith—Christian or other—are opposed to Science or Demonstration. Probability, according to Berkeley, is the ground of Faith. The evidence of religion is essentially moral or practical, and appeals to *man*, not to *pure intelligence*. Cf. Berkeley's *Sermon before the S. P. G.*

[1] Cf. *Siris*, sect. 330, 333, 336, 340.

use his eyes may see enough for the purposes either of nature or of grace—though by a light, dimmer indeed, or clearer, according to the place, or the distance, or the hour, or the medium. And it will be sufficient if such analogy appears between the dispensations of grace and nature, as may make it probable (although much should be unaccountable in both) to suppose them derived from the same Author, and the workmanship of one and the same Hand[2].

Alc. Those who saw, and touched, and handled Jesus Christ after His resurrection, if there were any such, may be said to have seen by a clear light: but to us the light is very dim, and yet it is expected we should believe this point as well as they. For my part, I believe, with Spinosa, that Christ's death was literal, but His resurrection allegorical[3].

Cri. And, for my part, I can see nothing in this celebrated infidel that should make me desert matters of fact, and moral evidence, to adopt his notions. Though I must needs own I admit an allegorical resurrection that proves the real—to wit, a resurrection of Christ's disciples from weakness to resolution, from fear to courage, from despair to hope, of which, for aught I can see, no rational account can be given, but the sensible evidence that our Lord was truly, really, and literally risen from the dead. But as it

[2] This sentence expresses the leading conception in the *Analogy* of Butler, the author's friend, published four years after. His analogical argument is not to be confounded with the analogical theory of theological knowledge of King or Brown. Butler suggests a unity of idea in the natural and the supernatural revelation—in reason and Christianity—sufficient for faith, but not for demonstration or knowledge.

[3] [Vide Spinosæ *Epist. ad Oldenburgium.*] AUTHOR. The following passage is probably referred to:—'Quod scilicet Christus non senatui, nec Pilato, nec cuiquam in proelium, sed sanctis tantummodo apparuerit, et quod Deus neque dextram neque sinistram habeat nec in loco, sed ubique secundum essentiam sit, et quod materia ubique sit eadem, et quod Deus extra mundum in spatio, quod fingunt, imaginario, sese non manifestet, et quòd denique corporis humani compages intra debitos limites solo aëris pondere coerceatur; facile videbis hanc Christi apparitionem non absimilem esse illi quæ Deus Abrahamo apparuit, quando hic vidit homines, quos ad secum prandendum invitavit. At dices, Apostolos omnes omnino credidisse quod Christus a morte resurrexerit at ad cœlum revera ascenderit: quod ego non nego. Nam ipse etiam Abrahamus credidit, quod Deus apud ipsum pransus fuerit, et omnes Israelitae, quod Deus a cœlo igne circumdatus ad montem Sinai descenderit et cum iis immediate locutus fuerit, quum tamen hæc et plura alia hujus modi apparitiones seu revelationes fuerint, captui et opinionibus eorum hominum accommodatæ, quibus Deus mentem suam iisdem revelare voluit. Concludo, itaque, Christi a mortuis resurrectionem revera spiritualem et solis fidelibus ad eorum captum revelatam esse, nempe quod Christus æternitate donatus qui et a mortuis (mortuous hic intelligo eo sensu, quo Christus dixit—*sinite mortuous sepelire mortuous suos*) surrexit, simul atque vitâ et morte singularis sanctitatis exemplum dedit; et eatenus discipulos suos a mortuis suscitat, quatenus ipsi hoc vitæ ejus et mortis exemplum sequuntur.' — *Epistola* XXIII. See also *Epistolæ* XXI., XXV.

cannot be denied that His disciples, who were eye-witnesses of His miracles and resurrection, had stronger evidence than we can have of those points[1]; so it cannot be denied, that such evidence was then more necessary, to induce men to embrace a new institution, contrary to the whole system of their education, their prejudices, their passions, their interests, and every human motive. Though to me it seems the moral evidence and probable arguments within our reach are abundantly sufficient to make prudent thinking men adhere to the faith handed down to us from our ancestors, established by the laws of our country, requiring submission in points above our knowledge, and for the rest recommending doctrines the most agreeable to our interest and our reason. And, however strong the light might have been at the fountain-head, yet its long continuance and propagation, by such unpromising instruments throughout the world, have been very wonderful. We may now take a more comprehensive view of the connexion, order, and progress of the Divine dispensations, and, by a retrospect on a long series of past ages, perceive a unity of design running throughout the whole, a gradual disclosing and fulfilling the purposes of Providence, a regular progress from types to antitypes, from things carnal to things spiritual, from earth to heaven. We may behold Christ crucified, that stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, putting a final period to the temple-worship of the one and the idolatry of the other, and that stone, which was cut out of the mountain without hands and brake in pieces all other kingdoms, become itself a great mountain.

32. If a due reflection on these things be not sufficient to beget a reverence for the Christian faith in the minds of men, I should rather impute it to any other cause than a wise and cautious incredulity: when I see their easiness of faith in the common concerns of life, where there is no prejudice or appetite to bias or disturb their natural judgment: when I see those very men that in religion will not stir a step without evidence, and at every turn expect demonstration, trust their health to a physician, their lives to a sailor, with an implicit faith—I cannot think they deserve the

[1] Cf. Berkeley's *Sermon before the S.P.G.* — In the *Theologiæ Christianæ Principia Mathematica* of John Craig, published in 1699, an attempt is made to prove mathematically that the historical evidence of Christianity, gradually weakening, will be reduced to zero A.D. 3150.

honour of being thought more incredulous than other men, or that they are more accustomed to know, and for this reason less inclined to believe. On the contrary, one is tempted to suspect that ignorance hath a greater share than science in our modern infidelity; and that it proceeds more from a wrong head, or an irregular will, than from deep researches.

Lys. We do not, it must be owned, think that learning or deep researches are necessary to pass right judgments upon things. I sometimes suspect that learning is apt to produce and justify whims, and sincerely believe we should do better without it. Our sect are divided on this point, but much the greater part think with me. I have heard more than once very observing men remark, that learning was the true human means which preserved religion in the world; and that, if we had it in our power to prefer blockheads in the church, all would soon be right.

Cri. Men must be strangely in love with their opinions, to put out their eyes rather than part with them. But it has been often remarked by observing men, that there are no greater bigots than infidels.

Lys. What! a free-thinker and a bigot—Impossible!

Cri. Not so impossible neither, that an infidel should be bigoted to his infidelity. Methinks I see a bigot wherever I see a man overbearing and positive without knowing why, laying the greatest stress on points of smallest moment, hasty to judge of the conscience, thoughts, and inward views of other men, impatient of reasoning against his own opinions, and choosing them with inclination rather than judgment, an enemy to learning, and attached to mean authorities. How far our modern infidels agree with this description, I leave to be considered by those who really consider and think for themselves.

Lys. We are no bigots; we are men that discover difficulties in religion, that tie knots and raise scruples, which disturb the repose and interrupt the golden dreams of bigots, who therefore cannot endure us.

Cri. They who cast about for difficulties will be sure to find or make them upon every subject; but he that would, upon the foot of reason, erect himself into a judge, in order to make a wise judgment on a subject of that nature, will not only consider the doubtful and difficult parts of it, but take a comprehensive view of

the whole, consider it in all its parts and relations, trace it to its original, examine its principles, effects, and tendencies, its proofs internal and external. He will distinguish between the clear points and the obscure, the certain and the uncertain, the essential and circumstantial, between what is genuine and what foreign. He will consider the different sorts of proof that belong to different things—where evidence is to be expected, where probability may suffice, and where it is reasonable to suppose there should be doubts and scruples. He will proportion his pains and exactness to the importance of the inquiry, and check that disposition of his mind to conclude all those notions, groundless prejudices, with which it was imbued before it knew the reason of them. He will silence his passions, and listen to truth. He will endeavour to untie knots as well as tie them, and dwell rather on the light parts of things than the obscure. He will balance the force of his understanding with the difficulty of the subject, and, to render his judgment impartial, hear evidence on all sides, and, so far as he is led by authority, choose to follow that of the honestest and wisest men. Now, it is my sincere opinion, the Christian religion may well stand the test of such an inquiry.

Lys. But such an inquiry would cost too much pains and time. We have thought of another method—the bringing religion to the test of wit and humour: this we find a much shorter, easier, and more effectual way. And, as all enemies are at liberty to choose their weapons, we make choice of those we are most expert at: and we are the better pleased with this choice, having observed that of all things a solid divine hates a jest.

Euph.[5] To consider the whole of the subject, to read and think on all sides, to object plainly, and answer directly, upon the foot of dry reason and argument, would be a very tedious and troublesome affair. Besides, it is attacking pedants at their own weapons. How much more delicate and artful is it, to give a hint, to cover one's-self with an enigma, to drop a *double entendre*, to keep it in one's power to recover, and slip aside, and leave his antagonist beating the air!

Lys. This hath been practised with great success, and I believe it the top method to gain proselytes, and confound pedants.

[5] What Euphranor here says is attributed to Lysicles in the first edition, and in the posthumous editions.

Cri. I have seen several things written in this way, which, I suppose, were copied from the behaviour of a sly sort of scorners one may sometimes meet with. Suppose a conceited man that would pass for witty, tipping the wink upon one, thrusting out his tongue at another; one while waggishly smiling, another with a grave mouth and ludicrous eyes; often affecting the countenance of one who smothered a jest, and sometimes bursting out in a horse-laugh: what a figure would this be, I will not say in the senate or council, but in a private visit among well-bred men! And yet this is the figure that certain great authors, who in this age would pass for models, and do pass for models, make in their polite and elaborate writings on the most weighty points.

Alc. I who profess myself an admirer, an adorer of reason, am obliged to own that in some cases the sharpness of ridicule can do more than the strength of argument. But if we exert ourselves in the use of mirth and humour, it is not for want of other weapons. It shall never be said that a free-thinker was afraid of reasoning. No, Crito, we have reasons in store, the best are yet to come; and if we can find an hour for another conference before we set out to-morrow morning, I will undertake you shall be plied with reasons, as clear, and home, and close to the point as you could wish.

being allowed infinite, you might pretend to screen them under the general notion of difficulties attending the nature of Infinity.

4. *Grace* is the main point in the Christian dispensation; nothing is oftener mentioned or more considered throughout the New Testament; wherein it is represented as somewhat of a very particular kind, distinct from anything revealed to the Jews, or known by the light of nature. This same grace is spoken of as the gift of God, as coming by Jesus Christ, as reigning, as abounding, as operating. Men are said to speak through grace, to believe through grace. Mention is made of the glory of grace, the riches of grace, the stewards of grace. Christians are said to be heirs of grace, to receive grace, grow in grace, be strong in grace, to stand in grace, and to fall from grace. And lastly, grace is said to justify and to save them. Hence Christianity is styled the covenant or dispensation of grace. And it is well known that no point hath created more controversy in the church than this doctrine of grace. What disputes about its nature, extent, and effects, about universal, efficacious, sufficient, preventing, irresistible grace, have employed the pens of Protestant as well as Popish divines, of Jansenists and Molinists, of Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians, as I have not the least curiosity to know, so I need not say. It sufficeth to observe, that there have been and are still subsisting great contests upon these points. Only one thing I should desire to be informed of, to wit, What is the clear and distinct *idea* marked by the word grace? I presume a man may know the bare meaning of a term, without going into the depth of all those learned inquiries. This surely is an easy matter, provided there is an idea annexed to such term. And if there is not, it can be neither the subject of a rational dispute, nor the object of real faith. Men may indeed impose upon themselves or others, and pretend to argue and believe, when at bottom there is no argument or belief, further than mere verbal trifling. Grace taken in the vulgar sense, either for beauty, or favour, I can easily understand. But when it denotes an active, vital, ruling principle, influencing and operating on the mind of man, distinct from every natural power or motive, I profess myself altogether unable to understand it, or frame any distinct idea of it; and therefore I cannot assent to any proposition concerning it, nor

consequently have any faith about it: and it is a self-evident truth, that God obligeth no man to impossibilities. At the request of a philosophical friend, I did cast an eye on the writings he shewed me of some divines, and talked with others on this subject, but after all I had read or heard could make nothing of it, having always found, whenever I laid aside the word *grace*, and looked into my own mind, a perfect vacuity or privation of all ideas. And, as I am apt to think men's minds and faculties are made much alike, I suspect that other men, if they examine what they call grace with the same exactness and indifference, would agree with me, that there was nothing in it but an empty name. This is not the only instance where a word often heard and pronounced is believed intelligible, for no other reason but because it is familiar. Of the same kind are many other points reputed necessary articles of faith. That which in the present case imposeth upon mankind I take to be partly this. Men speak of this holy principle as of something that acts, moves, and determines—taking their ideas from corporeal things, from motion and the force or *momentum* of bodies, which, being of an obvious and sensible[10] nature, they substitute in place of a thing spiritual and incomprehensible, which is a manifest delusion. For, though the idea of corporeal force be never so clear and intelligible, it will not therefore follow that the idea of grace, a thing perfectly incorporeal, must be so too. And though we may reason distinctly, perceive, assent, and form opinions about the one, it will by no means follow that we can do so of the other. Thus, it comes to pass that a clear sensible idea of what is real produceth, or rather is made a pretence for, an imaginary spiritual faith that terminates in no object—a thing impossible! For there can be no assent where there are no ideas: and where there is no assent there can be no faith: and what cannot be, that no man is obliged to. This is as clear as anything in Euclid.

5. The same method of reasoning may be applied by any man of sense to confute all other the most essential articles of the Christian faith. You are not therefore to wonder that a man

[10] Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 43—66, which resolve motion into the sensible appearance of things in various relative places. With Berkeley, the force which causes all motion is spiritual.

who proceeds on such solid grounds, such clear and evident principles, should be deaf to all you can say from moral evidence, or probable arguments, which are nothing in the balance against demonstration[11].

Euph. The more light and force there are in this discourse, the more you are to blame for not having produced it sooner. For my part, I should never have said one word against evidence. But let me see whether I understand you rightly. You say, every word in an intelligible discourse must stand for an idea; which ideas as far as they are clearly and distinctly apprehended, so far the discourse hath meaning, without which it is useless and insignificant.

Alc. I do.

Euph. For instance, when I hear the word *man*, *triangle*, *colour*, pronounced, they must excite in my mind distinct ideas of those things whereof they are signs; otherwise I cannot be said to understand them.

Alc. Right.

Euph. And this is the only true use of language.

Alc. That is what I affirm.

Euph. But every time the word *man* occurs in reading or conversation, I am not conscious that the particular distinct *idea* of a man is excited in my mind. For instance, when I read in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians these words, 'If a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself,' methinks I comprehend the force and meaning of this proposition, although I do not frame to myself the particular distinct idea of a man.

Alc. It is very true you do not form in your mind the particular idea of Peter, James, or John, of a fair or a black, a tall or a low, a fat or a lean, a straight or a crooked, a wise or a foolish, a sleeping or a waking man; but the abstract general idea[12] of *man*,

[11] If the Christian Mysteries are in themselves demonstrably only meaningless words, the moral or probable evidence which was offered (Dial. VI.) as the basis of Christian faith, must, it is argued, go for nothing —faith being irreconcileable with a total nescience of its professed object.

[12] In this and the three following sections the fundamental principle of Berkeley's metaphysical philosophy is introduced and illustrated, viz.: the logical impossibility of *abstract* general ideas and real existences, e.g. an extension which is neither tangible nor visible, and a tangible or a visible extension, which is neither hard nor soft, black nor white, but void of all sensible qualities. Hence his abolition of abstract Matter, Space, Time, Substance, Cause; and his analysis of what is signified by these names into sense-given or other experience of particular things. Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge* and *Dialogues of Hylas and Philonous* are an application of this fundamental principle.

prescinding from and exclusive of all particular shape, size, complexion, passions, faculties, and every individual circumstance.

To explain this matter more fully, you are to understand there is in the human mind a faculty of contemplating the general nature of things, separate from all those particularities which distinguish the individuals one from another. For example, in Peter, James, and John, you may observe in each a certain collection of stature, figure, colour, and other peculiar properties by which they are known asunder, distinguished from all other men, and, if I may so say, individuated. Now, leaving out of the idea of a man that which is peculiar to the individual, and retaining only that which is common to all men, you form an abstract universal idea of *man* or *human nature*, which includes no particular stature, shape, colour, or other quality, whether of mind or body. After the same manner you may observe particular triangles to differ one from another, as their sides are equal or unequal, and their angles greater or lesser; whence they are denominated equilateral, equicrural, or scalenum, obtusangular, acutangular, or rectangular. But the mind, excluding out of its ideas all these peculiar properties and distinctions, framed the general abstract idea of a *triangle*, which is neither equilateral, equicrural, nor scalenum, neither obtusangular, acutangular, nor rectangular; but all and none of these at once[13]. The same may be said of the general abstract idea of *colour*, which is something distinct from and exclusive of blue, red, green, yellow, and every other particular colour, including only that general essence in which they all agree. And what has been said of these three general names, and the abstract general ideas they stand for, may be applied to all others. For you must know that particular things or ideas being infinite, if each were marked or signified by a distinct proper name, words must have been innumerable, and language an endless impossible thing. Hence it comes to pass that appellative or general names stand, immediately and properly, not for particular but for abstract general ideas, which they never fail to excite in the mind, as oft as they are used to any significant purpose. And without this there could be no communication or enlargement of knowledge, no such thing as universal science or theorems of any kind. Now, for understanding any proposition or discourse, it is sufficient that

[13] [See Locke, *On Human Understanding*, Bk. IV. ch. 7.]—AUTHOR.

than I can. Pray, Alciphron, which are those things you would call absolutely impossible?

Alc. Such as include a contradiction.

Euph. Can you frame an idea of what includes a contradiction?

Alc. I cannot.

Euph. Consequently, whatever is absolutely impossible you cannot form an idea of?

Alc. This I grant.

Euph. But can a colour or triangle, such as you describe their abstract general ideas, really exist?

Alc. It is absolutely impossible such things should exist in nature.

Euph. Should it not follow, then, that they cannot exist in your mind, or, in other words, that you cannot conceive or frame an idea of them?

Alc. You seem, Euphranor, not to distinguish between pure intellect and imagination[15]. Abstract general ideas I take to be the object of pure intellect, which may conceive them, although they cannot perhaps be imagined.

Euph. I do not perceive that I can by any faculty, whether of intellect or imagination, conceive or frame an idea of that which is impossible and includes a contradiction. And I am very much at a loss to account for your admitting that in common instances, which you would make an argument against Divine faith and mysteries.

7. *Alc.* There must be some mistake in this. How is it possible there should be general knowledge without general propositions, or these without general names, which cannot be without general ideas by standing for which they become general?

Euph. But may not words become general by being made to stand indiscriminately for all particular ideas, which, from a mutual resemblance, belong to the same kind—without the intervention of any abstract general idea?

Alc. Is there, then, no such thing as a general idea?

Euph. May we not admit general ideas though we should not

[15] νοήματα and φαντασματα, as the Greeks term the respective products of these faculties. Cf. Berkeley's *De Motu*, sect. 53, in which his distinction of *pure intellect* and *imagination* is stated.

admit them to be made by abstraction, or though we should not allow of general abstract ideas? To me it seems a particular idea may become general by being used to stand for or represent other ideas; and that general knowledge is conversant about signs or general ideas made such by their signification; and which are considered rather in their relative capacity, and as substituted for others, than in their own nature, or for their own sake. A black line, for instance, an inch long, though in itself particular, may yet become universal, being used as a sign to stand for any line whatsoever[16].

Alc. It is your opinion, then, that words become general by representing an indefinite number of particular ideas?

Euph. It seems so to me.

Alc. Whenever, therefore, I hear a general name, it must be supposed to excite some one or other particular idea of that species in my mind.

Euph. I cannot say so neither. Pray, Alciphron, doth it seem to you necessary that, as often as the word *man* occurs in reading or discourse, you must form in your mind the idea of a particular man?

Alc. I own it doth not: and, not finding particular ideas always suggested by the words, I was led to think I had abstract general ideas suggested by them. And this is the opinion of all thinking men, who are agreed the only use of words is to suggest ideas. And indeed what other use can we assign them?

8. *Euph.* Be the use of words or names what it will, I can never think it is to do things impossible. Let us then inquire what it is? and see if we can make sense of our daily practice. Words, it is agreed, are signs: it may not therefore be amiss to examine the use of other signs, in order to know that of words. Counters, for instance, at a card-table are used, not for their own sake, but only as signs substituted for money, as words are for ideas. Say now, Alciphron, is it necessary every time these counters are used throughout the progress of a game, to frame an idea of the distinct sum or value that each represents?

[16] Indeed, according to Berkeley, all knowledge of sensible things is in this respect essentially universal. Ideas of sense, or sensations, must be *universalized* in order to become *things*. All sensible phenomena are symbols in a Divine Language—and this implies universality or reason in nature.

Alc. By no means: it is sufficient the players first agree on their respective values, and at last substitute those values in their stead.

Euph. And in casting up a sum, where the figures stand for pounds, shillings, and pence, do you think it necessary, throughout the whole progress of the operation, in each step to form ideas of pounds, shillings, and pence?

Alc. I do not; it will suffice if in the conclusion those figures direct our actions with respect to things.

Euph. From hence it seems to follow, that words may not be insignificant, although they should not, every time they are used, excite the ideas they signify in our minds; it being sufficient that we have it in our power to substitute things or ideas for their signs when there is occasion. It seems also to follow, that there may be another use of words besides that of marking and suggesting distinct ideas, to wit, the influencing our conduct and actions; which may be done either by forming rules for us to act by, or by raising certain passions, dispositions, and emotions in our minds. A discourse, therefore, that directs how to act or excite to the doing or forbearance of an action may, it seems, be useful and significant, although the words whereof it is composed should not bring each a distinct idea into our minds.

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. Pray tell me, Alciphron, is not an idea altogether inactive?

Alc. It is[17].

Euph. An agent therefore, an active mind, or spirit cannot be an idea, or like an idea. Whence it should seem to follow that those words which denote an active principle, soul, or spirit do not, in a strict and proper sense, stand for ideas. And yet they are not insignificant neither; since I understand what is signified by the term *I*, or *myself*, or know what it means, although it be no idea, or like an idea, but that which thinks, and wills, and apprehends ideas, and operates about them[18].

[17] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 25; *De Motu*, sect. 22—in which, as in many other passages, the inactivity of sensible things, and ideas of sense, is announced; and causation proper referred exclusively to minds, or persons, as distinguished from their ideas.

[18] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 2, 26, 27. This is the Berkeleian dualism, in which the Ego or person is regarded as something deeper than, and distinguishable from its ideas, which (especially ideas of sense) are in a great measure beyond its control.

Alc. What would you infer from this?

Euph. What hath been inferred already—that words may be significant, although they do not stand for ideas[19]. The contrary whereof having been presumed seems to have produced the doctrine of abstract ideas.

Alc. Will you not allow then that the mind can abstract?

Euph. I do not deny it may abstract in a certain sense; inasmuch as those things that can really exist, or be really perceived asunder, may be conceived asunder, or abstracted one from the other—for instance, a man's head from his body, colour from motion, figure from weight. But it will not thence follow that the mind can frame abstract general ideas, which appear to be impossible.

Alc. And yet it is a current opinion that every substantive name marks out and exhibits to the mind one distinct idea separate from all others.

Euph. Pray, Alciphron, is not the word *number* such a substantive name?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Do but try now whether you can frame an idea of number in abstract, exclusive of all signs, words, and things numbered. I profess for my own part I cannot.

Alc. Can it be so hard a matter to form a simple idea of number, the object of a most evident demonstrable science? Hold, let me see if I cannot abstract the idea of number from the numerical names and characters, and all particular numerical things.—Upon which Alciphron paused awhile, and then said, To confess the truth I do not find that I can.

Euph. But, though it seems neither you nor I can form distinct simple *ideas* of number, we can nevertheless make a very proper and significant use of numeral *names*. They direct us in the disposition and management of our affairs, and are of such necessary use, that we should not know how to do without them. And yet, if other men's faculties may be judged by mine, to obtain a precise simple abstract idea of number, is as difficult as to comprehend any mystery in religion[20].

[19] [See the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 135, and the 'Introduction,' sect. 20.]—AUTHOR.

[20] Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 7, 17, 18, 38, 39; also *Analyst*, sect. 7, 8, 47—50, in which the reasoning is analogous.

9. But, to come to your own instance, let us examine what idea we can frame of *force*—abstracted from body, motion, and outward sensible effects. For myself I do not find that I have or can have any such idea.

Alc. Surely every one knows what is meant by force.

Euph. And yet I question whether every one can form a distinct idea of force. Let me entreat you, Alciphron, be not amused by terms: lay aside the *word* force, and exclude every other thing from your thoughts, and then see what precise idea you have of force.

Alc. Force is that in bodies which produces motion and other sensible effects.

Euph. Is it then something distinct from those effects?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Be pleased now to exclude the consideration of its subject and effects, and contemplate force itself in its own precise idea.

Alc. I profess I find it no such easy matter.

Euph. Take your own advice, and shut your eyes to assist your meditation.—Upon this, Alciphron, having closed his eyes and mused a few minutes, declared he could make nothing of it.

And that, replied Euphranor, which it seems neither you nor I can frame an idea of, by your own remark of men's minds and faculties being made much alike, we may suppose others have no more an idea of than we.

Alc. We may.

Euph. But, notwithstanding all this, it is certain there are many speculations, reasonings, and disputes, refined subtilties, and nice distinctions about this same force[21]. And to explain its nature, and to distinguish the several notions or kinds of it, the terms *gravity*, *reaction*, *vis inertiæ*, *vis insita*, *vis impressa*, *vis mortua*, *vis viva*, *impetus*, *momentum*, *solicitatio*, *conatus*, and divers others such-like expressions, have been used by learned men: and no small controversies have arisen about the notions or definitions of these terms. It had puzzled men to know whether force[22] is spiritual or corporeal; whether it remains after action; how it is transferred from one body to another. Strange paradoxes have been framed

[21] Cf. *De Motu*, passim, with what Euphranor says here and in the following section; also *Siris*, sect. 249.

[22] With Berkeley, all force or power is spiritual, manifested in its sensible effects, according to physical rules.

about its nature, properties, and proportions: for instance, that contrary forces may at once subsist in the same quiescent body: that the force of percussion in a small particle is infinite[23]. For which, and other curiosities of the same sort, you may consult Borellus[24] *De Vi Percussionis*, the *Lezioni Academiche* of Torricelli[25], the *Exercitations* of Hermanus[26], and other writers. It is well known to the learned world what a controversy hath been carried on between mathematicians, particularly Monsieur Leibnitz and Monsieur Papin[27], in the Leipsic *Acta Eruditorum*, about the proportion of forces: whether they be each to other in a proportion compounded of the simple proportions of the bodies and the celerities, or in one compounded of the simple proportion of the bodies and the duplicate proportion of the celerities? A point, it seems, not yet agreed: as indeed the reality of the thing itself is made a question. Leibnitz distinguisheth between the *nisus elementaris*, and the *impetus* which is formed by a repetition of the *nisus elementaris*, and seems to think they do not exist in nature, but are made only by an abstraction of the mind. The same author, treating of original active force, to illustrate his subject, hath recourse to the substantial forms and *entelecheia* of Aristotle. And the ingenious Torricelli saith of force and impetus, that they are subtle abstracts and spiritual quintessences; and concerning the *momentum* and the velocity of heavy bodies falling, he saith they are *un certo che*, and *un non so che*; that is, in plain English, he knows not what to make of them. Upon the whole, therefore, may we not pronounce that—excluding body, time, space, motion, and all its sensible measures and effects[28]—we shall find it as difficult to form an idea of force as of grace?

Alc. I do not know what to think of it.

10. *Euph.* And yet, I presume, you allow there are very evident propositions or theorems relating to force, which contain useful

[23] Cf. *De Motu*, sect 9—19, 67.

[24] Borelli, an eminent Italian physician and mathematician of the seventeenth century, professor of mathematics at Pisa, and of medicine at Florence.

[25] The inventor of the barometer, another Italian physicist of the seventeenth century.

[26] A German physician and natural philosopher in the seventeenth century.

[27] A French natural philosopher who died in 1710 at Marburg, where he was professor of mathematics. He contributed papers on scientific subjects to the *Journal des Savans*, the *Philosophical Transactions*, and the *Acta Eruditorum* of Leipsic, and invented the apparatus since known as 'Papin's digester.'

[28] i.e. excluding the phenomena given in sense, which form our concrete or real ideas of body, space, time, and motion.

truths: for instance, that a body with conjunct forces describes the diagonal of a parallelogram, in the same time that it would the sides with separate. Is not this a principle of very extensive use? Doth not the doctrine of the composition and resolution of forces depend upon it, and, in consequence thereof, numberless rules and theorems directing men how to act, and explaining phenomena throughout the Mechanics and mathematical Philosophy? And if, by considering this doctrine of force, men arrive at the knowledge of many inventions in Mechanics, and are taught to frame engines, by means of which things difficult and otherwise impossible may be performed; and if the same doctrine which is so beneficial here below serveth also as a key to discover the nature of the celestial motions—shall we deny that it is of use, either in practice or speculation, because we have no distinct idea of force? Or that which we admit with regard to *force*, upon what pretence can we deny concerning *grace?* If there are queries, disputes, perplexities, diversity of notions and opinions about the one, so there are about the other also: if we can form no precise distinct idea of the one, so neither can we of the other. Ought we not therefore, by a parity of reason, to conclude there may be divers true and useful propositions concerning the one as well as the other? And that grace may be an object of our faith, and influence our life and actions, as a principle destructive of evil habits and productive of good ones, although we cannot attain a distinct *idea* of it, separate or abstracted from God the author, from man the subject, and from virtue and piety its effects?

11. Shall we not admit the same method of arguing, the same rules of logic, reason, and good sense, to obtain in things spiritual and things corporeal, in faith and science? and shall we not use the same candour, and make the same allowances, in examining the revelations of God and the inventions of men? For aught I see, that philosopher cannot be free from bias and prejudice, or be said to weigh things in an equal balance, who shall maintain the doctrine of force and reject that of grace, who shall admit the abstract idea of a triangle, and at the same time ridicule the Holy Trinity. But, however partial or prejudiced other minute philosophers might be, you have laid down for a maxim—that the

same logic which obtains in other matters must be admitted in religion.

Lys. I think, Alciphron, it would be more prudent to abide by the way of wit and humour than thus to try religion by the dry test of reason and logic.

Alc. Fear not: by all the rules of right reason, it is absolutely impossible that any mystery, and least of all the Trinity, should really be the object of man's faith.

Euph. I do not wonder you thought so, as long as you maintained that no man could assent to a proposition without perceiving or framing in his mind distinct ideas marked by the terms of it. But, although terms are signs, yet having granted that those signs may be significant, though they should not suggest ideas represented by them—provided they serve to regulate and influence our wills, passions, and conduct, you have consequently granted that the mind of man may assent to propositions containing such terms, when it is so directed or affected by them, notwithstanding it should not perceive distinct ideas marked by those terms. Whence it seems to follow that a man may believe the doctrine of the Trinity, if he finds it revealed in Holy Scripture that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are God, and that there is but one God—although he doth not frame in his mind any abstract or distinct ideas of trinity, substance, or personality; provided that this doctrine of a Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier makes proper impressions on his mind, producing therein love, hope, gratitude, and obedience, and thereby becomes a lively operative principle, influencing his life and actions, agreeably to that notion of saving faith which is required in a Christian. This, I say, whether right or wrong, seems to follow from your own principles and concessions. But, for further satisfaction, it may not be amiss to inquire whether there be anything parallel to this Christian faith in the minute philosophy. Suppose a fine gentleman or lady of fashion, who are too much employed to think for themselves, and are only free-thinkers at second-hand, have the advantage of being betimes initiated in the principles of your sect, by conversing with men of depth and genius, who have often declared it to be their opinion, the world is governed either by fate or by chance, it matters not which—will you deny it possible for such persons to yield their assent to either of these propositions?

Alc. I will not.

Euph. And may not such an assent be properly called *faith?*

Alc. It may.

Euph. And yet it is possible those disciples of the minute philosophy may not dive so deep as to be able to frame any abstract, or precise, or any determinate idea whatsoever, either of fate or of chance?

Alc. This too I grant.

Euph. So that, according to you, this same gentleman or lady may be said to believe or have faith where they have not ideas?

Alc. They may.

Euph. And may not this faith or persuasion produce real effects, and shew itself in the conduct and tenor of their lives, freeing them from the fears of superstition, and giving them a true relish of the world, with a noble indolence or indifference about what comes after?

Alc. It may.

Euph. And may not Christians, with equal reason, be allowed to believe the Divinity of our Saviour, or that in Him God and man make one Person, and be verily persuaded thereof, so far as for such faith or belief to become a real principle of life and conduct? inasmuch as, by virtue of such persuasion, they submit to His government, believe His doctrine, and practise His precepts, although they frame no abstract idea of the union between the Divine and human nature; nor may be able to clear up the notion of *person* to the contentment of a minute philosopher? To me it seems evident that if none but those who had nicely examined, and could themselves explain, the principle of Individuation in man, or untie the knots and answer the objections which may be raised even about human personal Identity, would require of us to explain the Divine mysteries, we should not be often called upon for a clear and distinct idea of *person* in relation to the Trinity, nor would the difficulties on that head be often objected to our faith.

Alc. Methinks, there is no such mystery in *personal identity.*

Euph. Pray, in what do you take it to consist?

Alc. In consciousness[29].

[29] So Locke in his *Essay*, Bk. II. ch. 27, which compare with what follows.

Euph. Whatever is possible may be supposed?

Alc. It may.

Euph. We will suppose now (which is possible in the nature of things, and reported to be fact) that a person, through some violent accident or distemper, should fall into such a total oblivion as to lose all consciousness of his past life and former ideas. I ask, is he not still the same person?

Alc. He is the same man, but not the same person. Indeed you ought not to suppose that a person loseth its former consciousness; for this is impossible, though a man perhaps may; but then he becomes another person. In the same person, it must be owned, some old ideas may be lost, and some new ones got; but a total change is inconsistent with identity of person.

Euph. Let us then suppose that a person hath ideas and is conscious during a certain space of time, which we will divide into three equal parts, whereof the later terms are marked by the letters A, B, C. In the first part of time, the person gets a certain number of ideas, which are retained in A: during the second part of time, he retains one half of his old ideas, and loseth the other half, in place of which he acquires as many new ones: so that in B his ideas are half old and half new. And in the third part, we will suppose him to lose the remainder of the ideas acquired in the first, and to get new ones in their stead, which are retained in C, together with those acquired in the second part of time. Is this a possible fair supposition?

Alc. It is.

Euph. Upon these premises, I am tempted to think one may demonstrate that personal identity doth not consist in consciousness.

Alc. As how?

Euph. You shall judge: but thus it seems to me. The persons in A and B are the same, being conscious of common ideas by supposition. The person in B is (for the same reason) one and the same with the person in C. Therefore, the person in A is the same with the person in C, by that undoubted axiom, *Quæ conveniunt uni tertio conveniunt inter se.* But the person in C hath no idea in common with the person in A. Therefore personal identity doth not consist in consciousness. What do you think, Alciphron, is not this a plain inference?

Alc. I tell you what I think: you will never assist my faith, by puzzling my knowledge.

12. *Euph.* There is, if I mistake not, a practical faith, or assent, which sheweth itself in the will and actions of a man, although his understanding may not be furnished with those abstract, precise, distinct ideas, which, whatever a philosopher may pretend, are acknowledged to be above the talents of common men; among whom, nevertheless, may be found, even according to your own concession, many instances of such practical faith, in other matters which do not concern religion. What should hinder, therefore, but that doctrines relating to heavenly mysteries might be taught, in this saving sense, to vulgar minds, which you may well think incapable of all teaching and faith, in the sense you suppose?

Which mistaken sense, said Crito, has given occasion to much profane and misapplied raillery. But all this may very justly be retorted on the minute philosophers themselves, who confound Scholasticism with Christianity, and impute to other men those perplexities, chimeras, and inconsistent ideas which are often the workmanship of their own brains, and proceed from their own wrong way of thinking. Who doth not see that such an ideal abstracted faith is never thought of by the bulk of Christians, husbandmen, for instance, artisans, or servants? Or what footsteps are there in the Holy Scripture to make us think that the wiredrawing of abstract ideas was a task enjoined either Jews or Christians? Is there anything in the law or the prophets, the evangelists or apostles, that looks like it? Every one whose understanding is not perverted by science falsely so-called may see the saving faith of Christians is quite of another kind—a vital operative principle, productive of charity and obedience[30].

Alc. What are we to think then of the disputes and decisions of the famous Council of Nice, and so many subsequent Councils? What was the intention of those venerable Fathers—the *homoousians* and the *homoiousians?* Why did they disturb themselves and the world with hard words, and subtle controversies?

Cri. Whatever their intention was, it could not be to beget

[30] Cf. Berkeley's *Sermon before the S. P. G.*

nice abstracted ideas of mysteries in the minds of common Christians, this being evidently impossible. Nor doth it appear that the bulk of Christian men did in those days think it any part of their duty to lay aside the words, shut their eyes, and frame those abstract ideas; any more than men now do of force, time, number, or several other things, about which they nevertheless believe, know, argue, and dispute. To me it seems that, whatever was the source of these controversies, and howsoever they were managed, wherein human infirmity must be supposed to have had its share, the main end was not, on either side, to convey precise positive ideas to the minds of men, by the use of those contested terms, but rather a negative sense, tending to exclude Polytheism on the one hand, and Sabellianism on the other[31].

Alc. But what shall we say of so many learned and ingenious divines, who from time to time have obliged the world with new explications of mysteries, who, having themselves professedly laboured to acquire accurate ideas, would recommend their discoveries and speculations to others for articles of faith?

Cri. To all such innovators in religion I would say with Jerome, 'Why after so many centuries do you pretend to teach us what was untaught before? Why explain what neither Peter nor Paul thought necessary to be explained[32]?' And it must be owned that the explication of mysteries in divinity, allowing the attempt as fruitless as the pursuit of the philosopher's stone in chemistry or the perpetual motion in mechanics, is no more than they, chargeable on the profession itself, but only on the wrongheaded professors of it.

13. It seems, that what hath been now said may be applied to other mysteries of our religion. Original sin, for instance, a man may find it impossible to form an idea of in abstract, or of the manner of its transmission; and yet the belief thereof may produce in his mind a salutary sense of his own unworthiness, and the goodness of his Redeemer: from whence may follow good habits, and from them good actions, the genuine effects of faith; which, considered in its true light, is a thing neither repugnant nor incomprehensible, as some men would persuade us, but suited

[31] [Vid. Sozomen, lib. II. cap. 8.]— AUTHOR.

[32] [Hieronym. (Jerome) *Ad Pammachium et Oceanum, de Erroribus Origenis.*]— AUTHOR.

even to vulgar capacities, placed in the will and affections rather than in the understanding, and producing holy lives rather than subtle theories. Faith, I say, is not an indolent perception, but an operative persuasion of mind, which ever worketh some suitable action, disposition, or emotion in those who have it; as it were easy to prove and illustrate by innumerable instances taken from human affairs. And, indeed, while the Christian religion is considered an institution fitted to ordinary minds, rather than to the nicer talents, whether improved or puzzled, of speculative men; and our notions about faith are accordingly taken from the commerce of the world, and practice of mankind, rather than from the peculiar systems of refiners; it will, I think, be no difficult matter to conceive and justify the meaning and use of our belief of mysteries, against the most confident assertions and objections of the minute philosophers, who are easily to be caught in those very snares which they have spun and spread for others. And that humour of controversy, the mother and nurse of heresies, would doubtless very much abate, if it was considered that things are to be rated, not by colour, shape, or stamp, so truly as by the weight. If the moment of opinions had been by some litigious divines made the measure of their zeal, it might have spared much trouble both to themselves and others. Certainly one that takes his notions of faith, opinion, and assent from common sense, and common use, and has maturely weighed the nature of signs and language, will not be so apt to controvert the wording of a mystery, or to break the peace of the church, for the sake of retaining or rejecting a term.

[[33]But, to convince you by a plain instance of the efficacious necessary use of faith without ideas: we will suppose a man of the world, a minute philosopher, prodigal and rapacious, one of large appetites and narrow circumstances, who shall have it in his power at once to seize upon a great fortune by one villanous act, a single breach of trust, which he can commit with impunity and secretly — Is it not natural to suppose him arguing in this manner? All mankind in their senses pursue their interest. The interests of the present life are either of mind, body, or fortune. If I commit this fault my mind

[33] This paragraph introduced in second edition, but afterwards omitted in posthumous editions. Cf. Dial. III. sect. 3—16.

will be easy (having nought to fear here or hereafter); my bodily pleasure will be multiplied; and my fortune enlarged. Suppose now, one of your refined theorists talks to him about the harmony of mind and affections, inward worth, truth of character, in one word, the beauty of virtue; which is the only interest he can propose to turn the scale against all other secular interests and sensual pleasures—would it not, think you, be a vain attempt? On the other hand, possess him with a thorough belief or persuasion that he shall forfeit eternal happiness, or incur eternal misery; and this alone may suffice to turn the scale. I say, in such a juncture what can the most plausible and refined philosophy of your sect offer to dissuade such a man from his purpose, more than assuring him that the abstracted delight of the mind, the enjoyments of an interior moral sense, the τὸ καλὸν, are what constitute his true interest? And what effect can this have on a mind callous to all these things, and at the same time strongly affected with a sense of corporeal pleasures, and the outward interest, ornaments, and conveniences of life? Whereas that very man, do but produce in him a sincere belief of a Future State, although it be a mystery, although it be what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, he shall, nevertheless, by virtue of such belief, be withheld from executing his wicked project—and that for reasons which all men can comprehend, though nobody can be the object of them. I will allow the points insisted on by your refined moralists to be as lovely and excellent as you please to a reasonable, reflecting, philosophical mind. But I will venture to say that, as the world goes, few, very few, will be influenced by them. We see, therefore, the necessary use, as well as the powerful effects of *faith*, even where we have not *ideas*.]

14. *Alc.* It seems, Euphranor, you would persuade me into an opinion, that there is nothing so singularly absurd as we are apt to think in the belief of mysteries; and that a man need not renounce his reason to maintain his religion. But, if this were true, how comes it to pass that, in proportion as men abound in knowledge, they dwindle in faith?

Euph. O Alciphron, I have learned from you that there is nothing like going to the bottom of things, and analysing them

into their first principles. I shall therefore make an essay of this method, for clearing up the nature of faith: with what success, I shall leave you to determine; for I dare not pronounce myself, on my own judgment, whether it be right or wrong: but thus it seems to me. The objections made to faith are by no means an effect of knowledge, but proceed rather from an ignorance of what knowledge is; which ignorance may possibly be found even in those who pass for masters of this or that particular branch of knowledge. Science and faith agree in this—that they both imply an assent of the mind: and, as the nature of the first is most clear and evident, it should be first considered in order to cast a light on the other. To trace things from their original, it seems that the human mind, naturally furnished with the ideas of things particular and concrete, and being designed, not for the bare intuition[34] of ideas, but for action and operation about them, and pursuing her own happiness therein, stands in need of certain general rules or theorems to direct her operations in this pursuit; the supplying which want is the true, original, reasonable end of studying the arts and sciences. Now, these rules being general, it follows that they are not to be obtained by the mere consideration[34] of the original ideas, or particular things, but by the means of marks and signs, which, being so far forth universal, become the immediate instruments and materials of science. It is not, therefore, by mere contemplation of particular things, and much less of their abstract general ideas, that the mind makes her progress, but by an apposite choice and skilful management of signs:—for instance, *force* and *number*, taken in concrete, with their adjuncts, subjects, and signs, are what every one knows; and considered in abstract, so as making precise ideas of themselves, they are what nobody can comprehend. That their abstract nature, therefore, is not the foundation of science is plain: and that barely considering their ideas in concrete, is not the method to advance in the respective sciences is what every one that reflects may see; nothing being more evident than that one who can neither write nor read, in common use understands the meaning of numeral words, as well as the best philosopher or mathematician.

[34] Note this use by Berkeley of 'intuition' and 'consideration' for presentation or representation, realization, generic individualization; and also what is said of the nature and purpose of scientific universality in what follows.

15. But here lies the difference: the one who understands the notation[35] of numbers, by means thereof is able to express briefly and distinctly all the variety and degrees of number, and to perform with ease and despatch several arithmetical operations by the help of general rules. Of all which operations as the use in human life is very evident, so it is no less evident that the performing them depends on the aptness of the notation. If we suppose rude mankind without the use of language, it may be presumed they would be ignorant of arithmetic. But the use of names, by the repetition whereof in a certain order they might express endless degrees of number, would be the first step towards that science. The next step would be, to devise proper marks of a permanent nature, and visible to the eye, the kind and order whereof must be chosen with judgment, and accommodated to the names. Which marking or notation would, in proportion as it was apt and regular, facilitate the invention and application of general rules to assist the mind in reasoning and judging, in extending, recording, and communicating its knowledge about numbers: in which theory and operations, the mind is immediately occupied about the signs or notes, by mediation of which it is directed to act about things, or number in concrete (as the logicians call it)—without ever considering the simple, abstract, intellectual, general idea of number. I imagine one need not think much to be convinced that the science of arithmetic, in its rise, operations, rules, and theorems, is altogether conversant about the artificial use of signs, names, and characters. These names and characters are universal, inasmuch as they are signs. The names are referred to things, and the characters to names, and both to operation. The names being few, and proceeding by a certain analogy, the characters will be more useful, the simpler they are, and the more aptly they express this analogy. Hence the old notation by letters was more useful than words written at length. And the modern notation by figures, expressing the progression or analogy of the names by their simple places, is much preferable to that, for ease and expedition, as the invention of algebraical symbols is to this, for extensive and general use. As arithmetic and algebra are sciences of great clearness, certainty, and extent, which are immediately conversant about

[35] Cf. *Arithmetica*, P. I. cap. 1.

signs, upon the skilful use and management whereof they entirely depend, so a little attention to them may possibly help us to judge of the progress of the mind in other sciences, which, though differing in nature, design, and object, may yet agree in the general methods of proof and inquiry.

16. If I mistake not, all sciences, so far as they are universal and demonstrable by human reason, will be found conversant about *signs* as their immediate object—though these in the application are referred to things. The reason whereof is not difficult to conceive. For, as the mind is better acquainted with some sort of objects, which are earlier suggested to it, strike it more sensibly, or are more easily comprehended than others, it is naturally led to substitute those objects for such as are more subtile, fleeting, or difficult to conceive. Nothing, I say, is more natural, than to make the things we know a step towards those we do not know; and to explain and represent things less familiar by others which are more so. Now, it is certain we imagine before we reflect, and we perceive by sense before we imagine, and of all our senses the sight[36] is the most clear, distinct, various, agreeable, and comprehensive. Hence it is natural to assist the intellect by the imagination, the imagination by sense, and the other senses by sight. Hence figures, metaphors, and types. We illustrate spiritual things by corporeal; we substitute sounds for thoughts, and written letters for sounds; emblems, symbols, and hieroglyphics, for things too obscure to strike, and too various or too fleeting to be retained. We substitute things imaginable for things intelligible, sensible things for imaginable, smaller things for those that are too great to be comprehended easily, and greater things for such as are too small to be discerned distinctly, present things for absent, permanent for perishing, and visible for invisible. Hence the use of models and diagrams. Hence right lines are substituted for time, velocity, and other things of very different natures. Hence we speak of spirits in a figurative style, expressing the operations of the mind by allusions and terms borrowed from sensible things, such as *apprehend*, *conceive*, *reflect*, *discourse*, and such-like: and hence those allegories which illustrate things intellectual by visions exhibited to the fancy. Plato[37], for in-

[36] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*—'Dedication.'

[37] See Socrates in the *Phædrus*.

stance, represents the mind presiding in her vehicle by the driver of a winged chariot, which sometimes moults and droops: and is drawn by two horses, the one good and of a good race, the other of a contrary kind—symbolically expressing the tendency of the mind towards the Divinity, as she soars or is borne aloft by two instincts like wings, the one in the Intellect towards truth, the other in the Will towards excellence, which instincts moult or are weakened by sensual inclinations; expressing also her alternate elevations and depressions, the struggles between reason and appetite, like horses that go an unequal pace, or draw different ways, embarrassing the soul in her progress to perfection. I am inclined to think the Doctrine of Signs[38] a point of great importance, and general extent, which, if duly considered, would cast no small light upon Things, and afford a just and genuine solution of many difficulties.

17. Thus much, upon the whole, may be said of all signs:—that they do not always suggest ideas signified to the mind: that when they suggest ideas, they are not general abstract ideas: that they have other uses besides barely standing for and exhibiting ideas, such as raising proper emotions, producing certain dispositions or habits of mind, and directing our actions in pursuit of that happiness, which is the ultimate end and design, the primary spring and motive[39], that sets rational agents at work: that the true end of speech, reason, science, faith, assent, in all its different degrees, is not merely, or principally, or always, the imparting or acquiring of ideas, but rather something of an active operative nature, tending to a conceived good; which may sometimes be obtained, not only although the ideas marked are not offered to the mind, but even although there should be no possibility of offering or exhibiting any such idea to the mind: for instance, the algebraic mark, which denotes the root of a negative square, hath its use in logistic operations, although it be impossible to form an idea of any such quantity. And what is true of algebraic signs is also true of words or language—modern algebra being in fact a more short, apposite,

[38] See Locke's *Essay*, Bk. IV. ch. 21, where the doctrine of Signs (σημειωτική) is represented as one of the three great heads of Science—the other two being the philosophy of Nature (φυσική), and of human Actions (πρακτική). With Berkeley, the whole sensible universe is a system of signs.

[39] Cf. Dial. III. 3—16; also *Passive Obedience*, sect. 5.

and artificial sort of language, and it being possible to express by words at length, though less conveniently, all the steps of an algebraical process[40]. And it must be confessed that even the mathematical sciences[41] themselves, which above all others are reckoned the most clear and certain, if they are considered, not as instruments to direct our practice, but as speculations to employ our curiosity, will be found to fall short in many instances of those clear and distinct ideas, which, it seems, the minute philosophers of this age, whether knowingly or ignorantly, expect and insist upon in the mysteries of religion.

18. Be the science or subject what it will, whensoever men quit particulars for generalities, things concrete for abstractions, when they forsake practical views, and the useful purposes of knowledge for barren speculation, considering means and instruments as ultimate ends, and labouring to attain precise ideas which they suppose indiscriminately annexed to all terms, they will be sure to embarrass themselves with difficulties and disputes. Such are those which have sprung up in geometry about the nature of the angle of contact, the doctrine of proportions, of indivisibles, infinitesimals, and divers other points; notwithstanding all which, that science is very rightly esteemed an excellent and useful one, and is really found to be so in many occasions of human life, wherein it governs and directs the actions of men, so that by the aid or influence thereof those operations become just and accurate which would otherwise be faulty and uncertain. And, from a parity of reason, we should not conclude any other doctrines which govern, influence, or direct the mind of man to be, any more than that, the less true or excellent, because they afford matter of controversy, and useless speculation to curious and licentious wits: particularly those articles of our Christian faith, which, in proportion as they are believed, persuade, and, as they persuade, influence the lives and actions of men. As to the perplexity of contradictions and abstracted notions, in all parts whether of human science or Divine faith, cavillers may

[40] So Stewart—in his *Elements*—on 'Abstraction.'

[41] Cf. the *Analyst* and the *Defence of Freethinking in Mathematics*, passim, published two years afterwards—an expansion and illustration of the thought contained in this sentence and in the following section.

equally object, and unwary persons incur, while the judicious avoid it. There is no need to depart from the received rules of reasoning to justify the belief of Christians. And if any pious men think otherwise, it may be supposed an effect, not of religion, or of reason, but only of human weakness. If this age be singularly productive of infidels, I shall not therefore conclude it to be more knowing, but only more presuming, than former ages: and their conceit, I doubt, is not the effect of consideration. To me it seems that the more thoroughly and extensively any man shall consider and scan the principles, objects, and methods of proceeding in arts and sciences, the more he will be convinced there is no weight in those plausible objections that are made against the mysteries of faith; which it will be no difficult matter for him to maintain or justify in the received method of arguing, on the common principles of logic, and by numberless avowed parallel cases, throughout the several branches of human knowledge, in all which the supposition of abstract ideas creates the same difficulties.

[[42]*Alc.* According to this doctrine, all points may be alike maintained. There will be nothing absurd in Popery, not even transubstantiation.

Cri. Pardon me. This doctrine justifies no article of faith which is not contained in Scripture, or which is repugnant to human reason, which implies a contradiction, or which leads to idolatry or wickedness of any kind—all which is very different from our not having a distinct or an abstract idea of a point.]

19. *Alc.* I will allow, Euphranor, this reasoning of yours to have all the force you meant it should have. I freely own there may be mysteries; that we may believe where we do not understand; and that faith may be of use, although its object is not distinctly apprehended. In a word, I grant there may be faith and mysteries in other things, but not in religion:—and that for this plain reason, because it is absurd to suppose there should be any such thing as religion; and, if there be no religion, it follows there cannot be religious faith or mysteries. Religion, it is evident, implies the worship of a God, which worship supposeth rewards and punishments, which suppose merits and

[42] Added in second edition, and omitted in posthumous editions.

demerits, actions good and evil, and these suppose *human liberty*[43]—a thing impossible: and, consequently, religion, a thing built thereon, must be an unreasonable absurd thing. There can be no rational hopes or fears where there is no guilt, nor any guilt where there is nothing done but what unavoidably follows from the structure of the world and the laws of motion. Corporeal objects strike on the organs of sense, whence ensues a vibration in the nerves, which, being communicated to the soul or animal spirit in the brain or root of the nerves, produceth therein that motion called volition: and this produceth a new determination in the spirits, causing them to flow into such nerves as must necessarily by the laws of mechanism produce such certain actions. This being the case, it follows that those things which vulgarly pass for human actions are to be esteemed mechanical, and that they are falsely ascribed to a free principle. There is therefore no foundation for praise or blame, fear or hope, reward or punishment; nor consequently for religion, which, as I observed before, is built upon and supposeth those things.

Euph. You imagine, Alciphron, if I rightly understand you, that man is a sort of organ played on by outward objects, which, according to the different shape and texture of the nerves, produce different motions and effects therein.

Alc. Man may, indeed, be fitly compared to an organ: but a puppet is the very thing. You must know that certain particles, issuing forth in right lines from all sensible objects, compose so many rays, or filaments, which drive, draw, and actuate every part of the soul and body of man, just as threads or wires do the joints of that little wooden machine vulgarly called a *puppet*: with this only difference, that the latter are gross, and visible to

[43] What follows (sect. 19—23), regarding Free-will and the moral agency of man, was probably in part suggested by the objections of Hobbes and Spinoza, but more immediately of Collins, by the controversy between Collins and Clarke, as also that between Clarke and Leibnitz, and by some passages in Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*. See also Cato's *Letters* (at first subscribed Diogenes), and Jackson's *Defence of Liberty* (1725).

It is curious that Dr. Clarke alleges as parallel, the evidence that we are agents, and the evidence that the sensible world exists independently. Neither, he says, can be *demonstrated*; for there is always a *possibility* that we have been so framed as to be unavoidably deceived by our experience, alike in our actions, and in our perceptions: our actions may be necessarily determined for us, and our perceptions may be a dream. See Clarke's *Remarks* on Collins, pp. 20, 24. This illustrates the common misinterpretation of Berkeley's conception of sensible things, confirmed in the anecdote of Clarke's meeting with Berkeley.—See Whiston's *Life of Clarke*, pp. 78—81, 133, 134.

common eyes, whereas the former are too fine and subtle to be discerned by any but a sagacious free-thinker. This admirably accounts for all those operations which we have been taught to ascribe to a thinking principle within us.

Euph. This is an ingenious thought, and must be of great use in freeing men from all anxiety about moral notions; as it transfers the principle of action from the human soul to things outward and foreign[44]. But I have my scruples about it. For, you suppose the mind in a literal sense to be moved, and its volitions to be mere motions. Now, if another should affirm, as it is not impossible some or other may, that the soul is incorporeal, and that motion is one thing and volition another, I would fain know how you could make your point clear to such a one. It must be owned very clear to those who admit the soul to be corporeal, and all her acts to be but so many motions. Upon this supposition, indeed, the light wherein you place human nature is no less true than it is fine and new. But, let any one deny this supposition, which is easily done, and the whole superstructure falls to the ground. If we grant the above-mentioned points, I will not deny a fatal necessity must ensue. But I see no reason for granting them. On the contrary, it seems plain that motion and thought are two things as really and as manifestly distinct as a triangle and a sound. It seems, therefore, that, in order to prove the necessity of human actions, you suppose what wants proof as much as the very point to be proved.

20. *Alc.* But, supposing the mind incorporeal, I shall, nevertheless, be able to prove my point. Not to amuse you with far-fetched arguments, I shall only desire you to look into your own breast and observe how things pass there, when an object offers itself to the mind. First, the understanding considers it: in the next place, the judgment decrees about it, as a thing to be chosen or rejected, to be omitted or done, in this or that manner: and this decree of the judgment doth necessarily determine the will, whose office is merely to execute what is ordained by another faculty: consequently, there is no such thing as freedom of the will. For, that which is necessary cannot be free. In

[44] But without a free personality, or personal agency, in each man, there can, for him, be no external world.

freedom there should be an indifference to either side of the question, a power to act or not to act, without prescription or control: and without this indifference and this power, it is evident the will cannot be free. But it is no less evident that the will is not indifferent in its actions, being absolutely determined and governed by the judgment. Now, whatever moves the judgment, whether the greatest present uneasiness, or the greatest apparent good, or whatever else it be, it is all one to the point in hand. The will, being ever concluded and controlled by the judgment, is in all cases alike under necessity. There is, indeed, throughout the whole of human nature, nothing like a principle of freedom, every faculty being determined in all its acts by something foreign to it. The understanding, for instance, cannot alter its idea, but must necessarily see it such as it presents itself. The appetites by a natural necessity are carried towards their respective objects. Reason cannot infer indifferently anything from anything, but is limited by the nature and connexion of things, and the eternal rules of reasoning. And, as this is confessedly the case of all other faculties, so it equally holds with respect to the will itself, as hath been already shewn. And, if we may credit the divine Characterizer of our times, this above all others must be allowed the most slavish faculty. 'Appetite (saith that noble writer[45]), which is elder brother to Reason, being the lad of stronger growth, is sure, on every contest, to take the advantage of drawing all to his own side. And Will, so highly boasted, is but at best a foot-ball or top between these youngsters, who prove very unfortunately matched; till the youngest, instead of now and then a kick or lash bestowed to little purpose, forsakes the ball or top itself, and begins to lay about his elder brother.'

Cri. This beautiful parable for style and manner might equal those of a known English writer[46] in low life, renowned for allegory, were it not a little incorrect, making the weaker lad find his account in laying about the stronger.

Alc. This is helped up by supposing the stronger lad the greater coward. But, be that as it will, so far as it relates to the point in hand, this is a clear state of the case.

The same point may be also proved from the prescience of

[45] Shaftesbury. See his *Characteristics*, vol. I. p. 187. [46] John Bunyan?

God. That which is certainly foreknown will certainly be. And what is certain is necessary. And necessary actions cannot be the effect of free-will. Thus you have this fundamental point of our free-thinking philosophy demonstrated different ways.

Euph. Tell me, Alciphron, do you think it implies a contradiction that God should make a man free?

Alc. I do not.

Euph. It is then possible there may be such a thing?

Alc. This I do not deny.

Euph. You can therefore conceive and suppose such a free agent?

Alc. Admitting that I can; what then?

Euph. Would not such a one think that he acted?

Alc. He would.

Euph. And condemn himself for some actions, and approve himself for others?

Alc. This too I grant.

Euph. Would he not think he deserved reward or punishment?

Alc. He would.

Euph. And are not all these characters actually found in man?

Alc. They are.

Euph. Tell me now, what other character of your supposed free agent may not actually be found in man? For, if there is none such, we must conclude that man hath all the marks of a free agent.

Alc. Let me see! I was certainly overseen in granting it possible, even for Almighty power, to make such a thing as a free agent. I wonder how I came to make such an absurd concession, after what had been, as I observed before, demonstrated so many different ways.

Euph. [[47]Certainly whatever is possible may be supposed: and whatever doth not imply a contradiction is possible to an Infinite Power: therefore, if a natural agent implieth no contradiction, such a being may be supposed. Perhaps, from this supposition, I might infer man to be free. But I will not suppose him that free agent; since, it seems, you pretend to have demonstrated the contrary.] O Alciphron! it is vulgarly observed that men judge of others by themselves. But, in judging of me by this rule, you may

[47] Added in second edition, and omitted in posthumous editions.

be mistaken. Many things are plain to one of your sagacity, which are not so to me, who am often bewildered rather than enlightened by those very proofs that with you pass for clear and evident. And, indeed, be the inference never so just, yet, so long as the premises are not clear, I cannot be thoroughly convinced. You must give me leave therefore to propose some questions, the solution of which may perhaps shew what at present I am not able to discern.

Alc. I shall leave what hath been said with you, to consider and ruminate upon. It is now time to set out on our journey: there is, therefore, no room for a long string of question and answer.

21. *Euph.* I shall then only beg leave, in a summary manner, to make a remark or two on what you have advanced. In the first place, I observe you take that for granted which I cannot grant, when you assert whatever is certain the same to be necessary. To me, certain and necessary seem very different; there being nothing in the former notion that implies constraint, nor consequently which may not consist with a man's being accountable for his actions. If it is foreseen that such an action shall be done, may it not also be foreseen that it shall be an effect of human choice and liberty? In the next place, I observe that you very nicely abstract and distinguish the actions of the mind, judgment, and will: that you make use of such terms as power, faculty, act, determination, indifference, freedom, necessity, and the like, as if they stood for distinct abstract ideas: and that this supposition seems to ensnare the mind into the same perplexities and errors, which, in all other instances, are observed to attend the doctrine of abstraction. It is self-evident that there is such a thing as motion: and yet there have been found philosophers, who, by refined reasoning, would undertake to prove that there was no such thing. Walking before them[48] was thought the proper way to confute those ingenious men. It is no less evident that man is a free agent: and though, by abstracted reasonings, you would puzzle me, and seem to prove the contrary, yet, so long as I am conscious[49] of

[48] *Solvitur ambulando*—the human way of solving ultimate questions.

[49] Berkeley appeals throughout to consciousness and common sense, on behalf alike of human agency, and of the dependent existence of sensible things, in the practical spirit which pervades his life.

my own actions, this inward evidence of plain fact will bear me up against all your reasonings, however subtle and refined. The confuting plain points by obscure ones may perhaps convince me of the ability of your philosophers, but never of their tenets. I cannot conceive why the acute Cratylus[50] should suppose a power of acting in the appetite and reason, and none at all in the will? Allowing, I say, the distinction of three such beings in the mind, I do not see how this could be true. But, if I cannot abstract and distinguish so many beings in the soul of man so accurately as you do, I do not find it necessary; since it is evident to me, in the gross and concrete, that I am a free agent. Nor will it avail to say—The will is governed by the judgment, or determined by the object, while, in every sudden common cause, I cannot discern nor abstract the decree of the judgment from the command of the will; while I know the sensible object to be absolutely inert: and lastly, while I am conscious that I am an active being, who can and do determine myself. If I should suppose things spiritual to be corporeal, or refine things actual and real into general abstracted notions, or by metaphysical skill split things simple and individual into manifold parts, I do not know what may follow. But, if I take things as they are, and ask any plain untutored man, whether he acts or is free in this or that particular action, he readily assents, and I as readily believe him—from what I find within. And thus, by an induction of particulars, I may conclude man to be a free agent, although I may be puzzled to define or conceive a notion of freedom in general and abstract. And if man be free, he is plainly accountable. But, if you shall define, abstract, suppose, and it shall follow that, according to your definitions, abstractions, and suppositions, there can be no freedom in man, and you shall thence infer that he is not accountable, I shall make bold to depart from your metaphysical Abstracted Sense, and appeal to the Common Sense of mankind.

22. If we consider the notions that obtain in the world of guilt and merit, praise and blame, accountable and unaccountable, we shall find the common question, in order to applaud or censure, acquit or condemn a man, is, whether he *did* such an action? and whether he was *himself* when he did it? which comes to the

[50] Shaftesbury.

same thing. It should seem, therefore, that, in the ordinary commerce of mankind, any person is esteemed accountable simply as he is an agent. And, though you should tell me that man is inactive, and that the sensible objects act upon him, yet my own experience assures me of the contrary. I know I act; and what I act I am accountable for. And, if this be true, the foundation of religion and morality remains unshaken. Religion, I say, is concerned no further than that man should be accountable: and this he is according to my sense, and the common sense of the world, if he acts; and that he doth act is self-evident. The grounds, therefore, and ends of religion are secured, whether your philosophic notion of liberty agrees with man's actions or no; and whether his actions are certain or contingent—the question being not, whether he did it with a free will? or what determined his will? not, whether it was certain or foreknown that he would do it? but only, whether he did it wilfully? as what must entitle him to the guilt or merit of it.

Alc. But still, the question recurs, whether man be free?

Euph. To determine this question, ought we not at first to determine what is meant by the word *free?*

Alc. We ought.

Euph. In my opinion, a man is said to be free, so far forth as he can do what he will. Is this so, or is it not?

Alc. It seems so.

Euph. Man, therefore, acting according to his will, is to be accounted free.

Alc. This I admit to be true in the vulgar sense. But a philosopher goes higher, and inquires whether man be free to will?

Euph. That is, whether he can will as he wills? I know not how philosophical it may be to ask this question, but it seems very unintelligible[51]. The notions of guilt and merit, justice and reward, are in the minds of men antecedent to all metaphysical disquisitions; and, according to those received natural notions, it

[51] It is the practical fact of human agency, or moral liberty, and not the metaphysical notion of it, that Berkeley is anxious about. He rejects as unintelligible the hypothesis that each voluntary act is caused by a previous voluntary act; and, rejecting abstractions, accepts the unique fact of *activity*, contained in our concrete experience of mind, but not of sensible things, and implied in the belief of responsibility which social life practically acknowledges.

is not doubted that man is accountable, that he acts, and is self-determined.

23. But a minute philosopher shall, in virtue of wrong suppositions, confound things most evidently distinct—body, for instance, with spirit; motion with volition; certainty with necessity. And an abstractor or refiner shall so analyse the most simple instantaneous act of the mind as to distinguish therein divers faculties and tendencies, principles and operations, causes and effects; and, having abstracted, supposed, and reasoned upon principles, gratuitous and obscure, he will conclude it is no act at all, and man no agent, but a puppet, or an organ played on by outward objects, and his will a top or a foot-ball. And this passeth for philosophy and free-thinking. Perhaps this may be what it passeth for, but it by no means seems a natural or just way of thinking. To me it seems that, if we begin from things particular and concrete, and thence proceed to general notions and conclusions, there will be no difficulty in this matter. But, if we begin with generalities, and lay our foundation in abstract ideas, we shall find ourselves entangled and lost in a labyrinth of our own making. I need not observe, what every one must see, the ridicule of proving man no agent[52], and yet pleading for free thought and action—of setting up at once for advocates of liberty and necessity. I have hastily thrown together these hints or remarks, on what you call a fundamental article of the minute philosophy, and your method of proving it, which seems to furnish an admirable specimen of the sophistry of abstract ideas. If, in this summary way, I have been more dogmatical than became me, you must excuse what you occasioned, by declining a joint and leisurely examination of the truth.

Alc. I think we have examined matters sufficiently.

Cri. To all you have said against human liberty, it is a sufficient answer to observe that your arguments proceed upon an erroneous supposition, either of the soul's being corporeal, or of abstract ideas [: [53] not to mention other gross mistakes and gratuitous principles. You might as well suppose that the soul is red or blue as that it is solid. You might as well make the will any-

[52] 'agent,' i.e. free-agent, all action being voluntary. Cf. 'Misatheus' in *Guardian*, No. 9, with this sentence.

[53] Added in second edition, and afterwards omitted in posthumous editions.

thing else as motion. And whatever you infer from such premises, which (to speak in the softest manner) are neither proved nor probable, I make no difficulty to reject. You distinguish in all human actions between the last degree of the judgment and the act of the will. You confound certainty with necessity: you inquire, and your inquiry amounts to an absurd question—whether man can will as he wills? As evidently true as is this identical proposition, so evidently false must that way of thinking be which led you to make a question of it. You take for granted that the mind is inactive, but that its ideas act upon it: as if the contrary were not evident to every man of common sense, who cannot but know that it is the mind which considers its ideas, chooses, rejects, examines, deliberates, decrees, in a word acts about them, and not they about it. Upon the whole, your premises being obscure and false, the fundamental point, which you pretend to demonstrate so many different ways, proves neither sense nor truth in any]. And, on the other hand, there is not need of much inquiry to be convinced of two points, than which none are more evident, more obvious, and more universally admitted by men of all sorts, learned or unlearned, in all times and places, to wit, that man acts, and is accountable for his actions. Whatever abstracters, refiners, or men prejudiced to a false hypothesis may pretend, it is, if I mistake not, evident to every thinking man of common sense, that human minds are so far from being engines or footballs, acted upon and bandied about by corporeal objects, without any inward principle of freedom or action, that the only original true notions that we have of *freedom*, *agent*, or *action* are obtained by reflecting on ourselves, and the operations of our own minds[54]. The singularity and credulity of minute philosophers, who suffer themselves to be abused by the paralogisms of three or four eminent patriarchs of infidelity in the last age, is, I think, not to be matched; there being no instance of bigoted superstition the ringleaders whereof have been able to seduce their followers more openly and more widely from the plain dictates of nature and common sense.

[54] Berkeley attributes the notion and belief of causation properly so-called to the experience we have of our own agency. Accordingly, the causal belief is simply our spontaneous reference of all motion or change in the universe to agency or mind. Cf. *De Motu* and *Siris*, passim.

24. *Alc.* It has been always an objection against the discoverers of truth, that they depart from received opinions. The character of singularity is a tax on free-thinking: and as such we most willingly bear it, and glory in it. A genuine philosopher is never modest in a false sense, to the preferring authority before reason, or an old and common opinion before a true one. Which false modesty, as it discourages men from treading in untrodden paths, or striking out new light, is, above all other qualities, the greatest enemy to free-thinking.

Cri. Authority in disputable points will have its weight with a judicious mind, which yet will follow evidence wherever it leads. Without preferring, we may allow it a good second to reason. Your gentlemen, therefore, of the minute philosophy may spare a world of common-place upon reason, and light, and discoveries. We are not attached to authority against reason, nor afraid of untrodden paths that lead to truth, and are ready to follow a new light when we are sure it is no *ignis fatuus*. Reason may oblige a man to believe against his inclinations: but why should a man quit salutary notions for others not less unreasonable than pernicious? Your schemes, and principles, and boasted demonstrations have been at large proposed and examined. You have shifted your notions, successively retreated from one scheme to another, and in the end renounced them all. Your objections have been treated in the same manner, and with the same event. If we except all that relates to the errors and faults of particular persons, and difficulties which, from the nature of things, we are not obliged to explain; it is surprising to see, after such magnificent threats, how little remains that can amount to a pertinent objection against the Christian religion. What you have produced has been tried by the fair test of reason; and though you should hope to prevail by ridicule when you cannot by reason, yet, in the upshot, I apprehend you will find it impracticable to destroy all sense of religion. Make your countrymen ever so vicious, ignorant, and profane, men will still be disposed to look up to a Supreme Being. Religion, right or wrong, will subsist in some shape or other, and some worship there will surely be either of God or the creature. As for your ridicule, can anything be more ridiculous than to see the most unmeaning men of the age set up for free-thinkers, men so strong

in assertion, and yet so weak in argument; advocates for freedom introducing a fatality; patriots trampling on the laws of their country; and pretenders to virtue destroying the motives of it? Let any impartial man but cast an eye on the opinions of the minute philosophers, and then say if anything can be more ridiculous than to believe such things and at the same time laugh at credulity.

25. *Lys.* Say what you will, we have the laughers on our side; and as for your reasoning I take it to be another name for sophistry.

Cri. And I suppose by the same rule you take your own sophisms for arguments. To speak plainly, I know no sort of sophism that is not employed by minute philosophers against religion. They are guilty of a *petitio principii*, in taking for granted that we believe contradictions; of *non causa pro causa*, in affirming that uncharitable feuds and discords are the effects of Christianity; of *ignoratio elenchi*, in expecting demonstrations where we pretend only to faith. If I were not afraid to offend the delicacy of polite ears, nothing were easier than to assign instances of every kind of sophism, which would shew how skilful your own philosophers are in the practice of that sophistry you impute to others.

Euph. For my own part, if sophistry be the art or faculty of deceiving other men, I must acquit these gentlemen of it. They seem to have led me a progress through atheism, libertinism, enthusiasm, fatalism, not to convince me of the truth of any of them, so much as to confirm me in my own way of thinking. They have exposed their fairy ware not to cheat but divert us. As I know them to be professed masters of ridicule, so in a serious sense I know not what to make of them.

Alc. You do not know what to make of us! I should be sorry you did. He must be a superficial philosopher that is soon fathomed.

26. *Cri.* The ambiguous character is, it seems, the sure way to fame and esteem in the learned world, as it stands constituted at present. When the ingenious reader is at a loss to determine whether his author be atheist or deist or polytheist, stoic or epicurean, sceptic or dogmatist, infidel or enthusiast, in jest or in earnest, he concludes him without hesitation to be enigmatical

and profound. In fact, it is true of the most admired writers of the age, that no man alive can tell what to make of them, or what they would be at.

Alc. We have among us moles that dig deep under ground, and eagles that soar out of sight. We can act all parts and become all opinions, putting them on or off with great freedom of wit and humour.

Euph. It seems then you are a pair of inscrutable, unfathomable, fashionable philosophers.

Lys. It cannot be denied.

Euph. But, I remember, you set out with an open dogmatical air, and talked of plain principles, and evident reasoning, promised to make things as clear as noonday, to extirpate wrong notions and plant right in their stead. Soon after, you began to recede from your first notions, and adopt others; you advanced one while and retreated another, yielded and retracted, said and unsaid. And after having followed you through so many untrodden paths and intricate mazes I find myself never the nearer.

Alc. Did we not tell you the gentlemen of our sect are great proficients in raillery?

Euph. But, methinks, it is a vain attempt for a plain man of any settled belief or principles, to engage with such slippery, fugitive, changeable philosophers. It seems as if a man should stand still in the same place, while his adversary chooses and changes his situation, has full range and liberty to traverse the field, and attack him on all sides and in all shapes, from a nearer or further distance, on horseback or on foot, in light or heavy armour, in close fight or with missive weapons.

Alc. It must be owned, a gentleman hath great advantage over a strait-laced pedant or bigot.

Euph. But, after all, what am I the better for the conversation of two such knowing gentlemen? I hoped to have unlearned my errors, and to have learned truths from you, but, to my great disappointment, I do not find that I am either untaught or taught.

Alc. To unteach men their prejudices is a difficult task; and this must first be done, before we can pretend to teach them the truth. Besides, we have at present no time to prove and argue.

Euph. But suppose my mind white paper; and, without being at any pains to extirpate my opinions, or prove your own, only say what you

would write thereon, or what you would teach me in case I were teachable. Be for once in earnest, and let me know some one conclusion of yours before we part; or I shall entreat Crito to violate the laws of hospitality towards those who have violated the laws of philosophy, by hanging out false lights to one benighted in ignorance and error. I appeal to you (said he, turning to Crito), whether these philosophical knight-errants should not be confined in this castle of yours, till they make reparation.

Euphranor has reason, said Crito, and my sentence is, that you remain here in durance till you have done something towards satisfying the engagement I am under—having promised, he should know your opinions from yourselves, which you also agreed to.

27. *Alc.* Since it must be so, I will now reveal what I take to be the sum and substance, the grand arcanum and ultimate conclusion of our sect, and that in two words, ΠΑΝΤΑ ΥΠΟΛΗΨΙΣ.

Cri. You are then a downright sceptic. But, sceptic as you are, you own it probable there is a God, certain that the Christian religion is useful, possible it may be true, certain that, if it be, the minute philosophers are in a bad way. This being the case, how can it be questioned what course a wise man should take? Whether the principles of Christians or infidels are truest may be made a question; but which are safest can be none. Certainly if you doubt of all opinions you must doubt of your own; and then, for aught you know, the Christian may be true. The more doubt the more room there is for faith, a sceptic of all men having the least right to demand evidence. But, whatever uncertainty there may be in other points, thus much is certain:—either there is or is not a God: there is or is not a revelation: man either is or is not an agent: the soul is or is not immortal. If the negatives are not sure, the affirmatives are possible. If the negatives are improbable, the affirmatives are probable. In proportion as any of your ingenious men finds himself unable to prove any one of these negatives, he hath grounds to suspect he may be mistaken. A minute philosopher, therefore, that would act a consistent part, should have the diffidence, the modesty, and the timidity, as well as the doubts of a sceptic; not pretend to an ocean of light, and then lead us to an abyss of darkness. If I have any notion of ridicule, this is most ridiculous. But your ridiculing what, for

aught you know, may be true, I can make no sense of. It is neither acting as a wise man with regard to your own interest, nor as a good man with regard to that of your country.

28. Tully saith somewhere, *Aut undique religionem tolle, aut usquequaque conserva*: Either let us have no religion at all, or let it be respected. If any single instance can be shewn of a people that ever prospered without some religion, or if there be any religion better than the Christian, propose it in the grand assembly of the nation to change our constitution, and either live without religion, or introduce that new religion. A sceptic, as well as other men, is member of a community, and can distinguish between good and evil, natural or political. Be this then his guide as a patriot, though he be no Christian. Or, if he doth not pretend even to this discernment, let him not pretend to correct or alter what he knows nothing of: neither let him that only doubts behave as if he could demonstrate. Timagoras is wont to say, I find my country in possession of certain tenets; they appear to have a useful tendency, and as such are encouraged by the legislature; they make a main part of our constitution; I do not find these innovators can disprove them, or substitute things more useful and certain in their stead: out of regard therefore to the good of mankind and the laws of my country, I shall acquiesce in them. I do not say Timagoras is a Christian, but I reckon him a patriot. Not to inquire in a point of so great concern is folly, but it is still a higher degree of folly to condemn without inquiring.

Lysicles seemed heartily tired of this conversation. It is now late, said he to Alciphron, and all things are ready for our departure. Every one hath his own way of thinking; and it is as impossible for me to adopt another man's as to make his complexion and features mine.

Alciphron pleaded that, having complied with Euphranor's conditions, they were now at liberty: and Euphranor answered that, all he desired having been to know their tenets, he had nothing further to pretend.

29. The philosophers being gone, I observed to Crito how unaccountable it was that men so easy to confute should yet be so difficult to convince.

This, said Crito, is accounted for by Aristotle, who tells us that arguments have not an effect on all men, but only on them whose minds are prepared by education and custom, as land is for seed[55]. Make a point never so clear, it is great odds that a man whose habits and the bent of whose mind lie in a contrary way shall be unable to comprehend it. So weak a thing is reason in competition with inclination.

I replied, This answer might hold with respect to other persons and other times; but when the question was of inquisitive men, in an age wherein reason was so much cultivated, and thinking so much in vogue, it did not seem satisfactory.

I have known it remarked, said Crito, by a man of much observation, that in the present age thinking is more talked of but less practised than in ancient times; and that since the revival of learning men have read much and wrote much, but thought little: insomuch that with us to think closely and justly is the least part of a learned man, and none at all of a polite man. The free-thinkers, it must be owned, make great pretensions to thinking, and yet they shew but little exactness in it. A lively man, and what the world calls a man of sense, are often destitute of this talent; which is not a mere gift of nature, but must be improved and perfected by much attention and exercise on very different subjects; a thing of more pains and time than the hasty men of parts in our age care to take. Such were the sentiments of a judicious friend of mine. And if you are not already sufficiently convinced of these truths, you need only cast an eye on the dark and confused, but nevertheless admired, writers of this famous sect; and then you will be able to judge whether those who are led by men of such wrong heads can have very good ones of their own. Such, for instance, was Spinosa, the great leader of our modern infidels, in whom are to be found many schemes and notions much admired and followed of late years:—such as undermining religion under the pretence of vindicating and explaining it: the maintaining it not necessary to believe in Christ according to the flesh: the persuading men that miracles are to be understood only in a spiritual and allegorical sense: that vice is not so bad a thing as we are apt to think: that men are mere machines impelled by fatal necessity.

[55] [*Ethic. ad Nicom.* lib. X. cap. 9.]—Author.

I have heard, said I, Spinosa represented as a man of close argument and demonstration.

He did, replied Crito, demonstrate; but it was after such a manner as any one may demonstrate anything. Allow a man the privilege to make his own definitions of common words, and it will be no hard matter for him to infer conclusions which in one sense shall be true and in another false, at once seeming paradoxes and manifest truisms. For example, let but Spinosa define natural right to be natural power, and he will easily demonstrate that 'whatever a man can do' he hath a right to do[56]. Nothing can be plainer than the folly of this proceeding: but our pretenders to the *lumen siccum* are so passionately prejudiced against religion, as to swallow the grossest nonsense and sophistry of weak and wicked writers for demonstration.

30. And so great a noise do these men make, with their thinking, reasoning, and demonstrating, as to prejudice some well-meaning persons against all use and improvement of reason. Honest Demea, having seen a neighbour of his ruined by the vices of a free-thinking son, contracted such a prejudice against thinking that he would not suffer his own to read Euclid, being told it might teach him to think; till a friend convinced him the epidemical distemper was not thinking, but only the want and affectation of it. I know an eminent free-thinker who never goes to bed without a gallon of wine in his belly, and is sure to replenish before the fumes are off his brain, by which means he has not had one sober thought these seven years; another, that would not for the world lose the privilege and reputation of free-thinking, who games all night, and lies in bed all day: and as for the outside or appearance of thought in that meagre minute philosopher Ibycus, it is an effect, not of thinking, but of carking, cheating, and writing in an office. Strange, said he, that such men should set up for free-thinkers! But it is yet more strange that other men should be out of conceit with thinking and reasoning, for the sake of such pretenders.

I answered, that some good men conceived an opposition between reason and religion, faith and knowledge, nature and

[56] [*Tractat. Polit.* cap. 2.]—AUTHOR.—Spinozism, alike as a system of ethics and of metaphysics, was imperfectly interpreted when Berkeley wrote.

grace; and that, consequently, the way to promote religion was to quench the light of nature and discourage all rational inquiry.

31. How right the intentions of these men may be, replied Crito, I shall not say; but surely their notions are very wrong. Can anything be more dishonourable to religion than the representing it as an unreasonable, unnatural, ignorant institution? God is the Father of all lights, whether natural or revealed. Natural concupiscence is one thing, and the light of nature another. You cannot therefore argue from the former against the latter: neither can you from science, falsely so called, against real knowledge. Whatever, therefore, is said of the one in Holy Scripture is not to be interpreted of the other.

I insisted that human learning in the hands of divines had, from time to time, created great disputes and divisions in the church.

As abstracted metaphysics[57], replied Crito, have always a tendency to produce disputes among Christians, as well as other men, so it should seem that genuine truth and knowledge would allay this humour, which makes men sacrifice the undisputed duties of peace and charity to disputable notions.

After all, said I, whatever may be said for reason, it is plain the sceptics and infidels of the age are not to be cured by it.

I will not dispute this point, said Crito: in order to cure a distemper, you should consider what produced it. Had men reasoned themselves into a wrong opinion, one might hope to reason them out of it. But this is not the case; the infidelity of most minute philosophers seeming an effect of very different motives from thought and reason. Little incidents, vanity, disgust, humour, inclination, without the least assistance from reason, are often known to make infidels. Where the general tendency of a doctrine is disagreeable, the mind is prepared to relish and improve everything that with the least pretence seems to make against it. Hence the coarse manners of a country curate, the polite manners of a chaplain, the wit of a minute philosopher, a jest, a song, a tale can serve instead of a reason for infidelity. Bupalus

[57] Cf. Berkeley's *Sermon before the S. P. G.*; and his warnings against the abstractions of metaphysics throughout his metaphysical writings.

preferred a rake in the church, and then made use of him as an argument against it. Vice, indolence, faction, and fashion produce minute philosophers, and mere petulancy not a few. Who then can expect a thing so irrational and capricious should yield to reason? It may, nevertheless, be worth while to argue against such men, and expose their fallacies, if not for their own sake, yet for the sake of others; as it may lessen their credit, and prevent the growth of their sect, by removing a prejudice in their favour, which sometimes inclines others as well as themselves to think they have made a monopoly of human reason.

32. The most general pretext which looks like reason is taken from the variety of opinions about religion. This is a resting-stone to a lazy and superficial mind. But one of more spirit and a juster way of thinking makes it a step whence he looks about, and proceeds to examine, and compare the differing institutions of religion. He will observe which of these is the most sublime and rational in its doctrines, most venerable in its mysteries, most useful in its precepts, most decent in its worship? which createth the noblest hopes, and most worthy views? He will consider their rise and progress: which oweth least to human arts or arms? which flatters the senses and gross inclinations of men? which adorns and improves the most excellent part of our nature? which hath been propagated in the most wonderful manner? which hath surmounted the greatest difficulties, or shewed the most disinterested zeal and sincerity in its professors? He will inquire, which best accords with nature and history? He will consider, what savours of the world, and what looks like wisdom from above? He will be careful to separate human alloy from that which is Divine; and, upon the whole, form his judgment like a reasonable free-thinker. But, instead of taking such a rational course, one of these hasty sceptics shall conclude without demurring—there is no wisdom in politics, no honesty in dealings, no knowledge in philosophy, no truth in religion; and all by one and the same sort of inference, from the numerous examples of folly, knavery, ignorance, and error which are to be met with in the world. But, as those who are unknowing in everything else imagine themselves sharpsighted in religion, this learned sophism is oftenest levelled against Christianity.

33. In my opinion, he that would convince an infidel who can be brought to reason ought in the first place clearly to convince him of the being of a God—it seeming to me, that any man who is really a Theist, cannot be an enemy to the Christian religion; and that the ignorance or disbelief of this fundamental point is that which at bottom constitutes the minute philosopher[58]. I imagine they who are acquainted with the great authors in the minute philosophy need not be told of this. The being of a God is capable of clear proof, and a proper object of human reason: whereas the mysteries of His nature, and indeed whatever there is of mystery in religion, to endeavour to explain and prove by reason[59] is a vain attempt. It is sufficient if we can shew there is nothing absurd or repugnant in our belief of those points, and, instead of framing hypotheses to explain them, we use our reason only for answering the objections brought against them. But, on all occasions, we ought to distinguish the serious, modest, ingenuous man of sense, who hath scruples about religion, and behaves like a prudent man in doubt, from the minute philosophers, those profane and conceited men, who must needs proselyte others to their own doubts. When one of this stamp presents himself, we should consider what species he is of: whether a first or a second-hand philosopher, a libertine, scorner, or sceptic? Each character requiring a peculiar treatment. Some men are too ignorant to be humble, without which there can be no docility. But though a man must in some degree have thought, and considered, to be capable of being convinced, yet it is possible the most ignorant may be laughed out of his opinions. I knew a woman of sense reduce two minute philosophers, who had long been a nuisance to the neighbourhood, by taking her cue from their predominant affectations. The one set up for being the most incredulous man upon earth, the other for the most unbounded freedom. She observed to the first, that he who had credulity sufficient to trust the most valuable things, his life and

[58] Cf. Dial. I. sect. 8, 9: *Theory of Vision Vindicated*, sect. 2—8.

[59] *i.e.* by speculative reasoning, evolved from *à priori* principles, which Berkeley here employs only negatively—to shew that religious mysteries on the received rules of reasoning, are in themselves possible. He turns to practical reason and moral evidence for the positive support of Christian faith. Religion is rooted in human nature as a whole, but it cannot be derived from the merely scientific intelligence or *lumen siccum*.

fortune, to his apothecary and lawyer, ridiculously affected the character of incredulous by refusing to trust his soul, a thing in his own account but a mere trifle, to his parish priest. The other, being what you call a beau, she made sensible how absolute a slave he was in point of dress, to him the most important thing in the world, while he was earnestly contending for a liberty of thinking, with which he never troubled his head; and how much more it concerned and became him to assert an independency on fashion, and obtain scope for his genius where it was best qualified to exert itself. The minute philosophers at first hand are very few, and, considered in themselves, of small consequence: but their followers, who pin their faith upon them, are numerous, and not less confident than credulous; there being something in the air and manner of these second-hand philosophers very apt to disconcert a man of gravity and argument, and much more difficult to be borne than the weight of their objections.

34. Crito having made an end, Euphranor declared it to be his opinion, that it would much conduce to the public benefit, if, instead of discouraging free-thinking, there was erected in the midst of this free country a Dianoetic Academy, or seminary for free-thinkers, provided with retired chambers, and galleries, and shady walks and groves, where, after seven years spent in silence and meditation, a man might commence a genuine free-thinker, and from that time forward have licence to think what he pleased, and a badge to distinguish him from counterfeits.

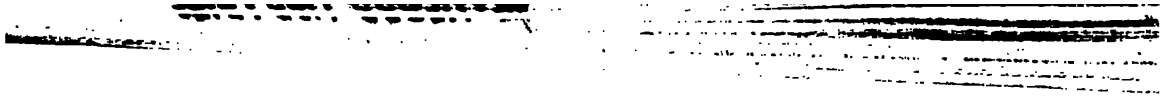
In good earnest, said Crito, I imagine that thinking is the great *desideratum* of the present age; and that the real cause of whatever is amiss may justly be reckoned the general neglect of education in those who need it most—the people of fashion. What can be expected where those who have the most influence have the least sense, and those who are sure to be followed set the worst example? where youth so uneducated are yet so forward? where modesty is esteemed pusillanimity, and a deference to years, knowledge, religion, laws, want of sense and spirit? Such untimely growth of genius would not have been valued or encouraged by the wise men of antiquity; whose sentiments on this point are so ill suited to the genius of our times that it is to be feared modern ears could not bear them. But, however ridiculous

such maxims might seem to our British youth, who are so capable and so forward to try experiments, and mend the constitution of their country, I believe it will be admitted by men of sense that, if the governing part of mankind would in these days, for experiment's sake, consider themselves in that old Homerical light as pastors of the people, whose duty it was to improve their flock, they would soon find that this is to be done by an education very different from the modern, and other-guess maxims than those of the minute philosophy. If our youth were really inured to thought and reflection, and an acquaintance with the excellent writers of antiquity, we should soon see that licentious humour, vulgarly called *free-thinking*, banished from the presence of gentlemen, together with ignorance and ill taste; which as they are inseparable from vice, so men follow vice for the sake of pleasure, and fly from virtue through an abhorrence of pain. Their minds, therefore, betimes should be formed and accustomed to receive pleasure and pain from proper objects, or, which is the same thing, to have their inclinations and aversions rightly placed. Καλῶς χαίρειν ἢ μισεῖν. This, according to Plato and Aristotle, was the ὀρθὴ παιδεία, the right education[60]. And those who, in their own minds, their health, or their fortunes, feel the cursed effects of a wrong one, would do well to consider, they cannot make better amends for what was amiss in themselves than by preventing the same in their posterity.

While Crito was saying this, company came in, which put an end to our conversation.

[60] [Plato *in Protag.*, and Arist. *Ethic. ad Nicom.*, lib. II. cap. 2, and lib. X. cap. 9.]—AUTHOR.

EDITOR'S PREFACE TO SIRIS.



EDITOR'S PREFACE TO SIRIS.

SIRIS—Berkeley's 'Chain of philosophical reflexions and inquiries'—presents his metaphysical philosophy in its latest form, as it was when he was about sixty years of age. More than thirty years had then elapsed since he had analyzed the meaning of the word Externality, in the *Principles of Human Knowledge;* and more than twenty since he had unfolded, in the *De Motu*, thoughts about Causation, which prepare the reader for the Chain that here connects the supposed medicinal virtues of Tar-water with the throne of the Divine Ruler of the universe. In the interval, more than ten years before the date of *Siris*, he had defended his early philosophy, in defending his New Theory of Vision; and had in *Alciphron* diffused the same philosophy through that popular vindication of Christian theism and morality. Now, in 1744, his philosophy, developed and enriched by much reading and meditation, is made to crown a philanthropic treatise in Medicine.

Siris, regarded as a philosophical essay, is an exposition, on the basis of Ancient Philosophy, of Berkeley's spiritual theory of cause and substance—in which the whole phenomenal world, past, present, and future, is conceived in necessary dependence upon active Mind. It proclaims that sensible existence, and indeed existence as such, centres in conscious intelligence. Its chain of 'philosophical reflexions and inquiries' is the strangest, yet among the most characteristic, of all Berkeley's works. On the whole, the scanty speculative literature of these islands in last century contains no other work nearly so remarkable; although curiously it has been much overlooked even by those curious in the history and bibliography of British philosophy. Every time we open its pages we find fresh seeds of thought. There is the unexpectedness of genius in its whole movement. It breathes the spirit of Plato and the Neoplatonists, in the least Platonic generation of

English history since the revival of letters, and it draws this Platonic spirit from a thing of sense so commonplace as Tar. It connects tar with the highest thoughts in metaphysics and theology, by links which involve some of the most subtle botanical, chemical, physiological, optical, and mechanical speculations of its time. Its immediate aim is to confirm rationally the benevolent conjecture, that tar yields a 'water of health' fitted to remove, or at least to mitigate, all the diseases of our organism in this mortal state, and to convey fresh supplies of the very vital essence itself into the animal creation. Its successive links of physical science are gradually connected, first, with the ancient and modern literature of the Philosophy of Fire, and, next, with the meditations of the greatest of the ancients, about the substantial and causal dependence of the universe upon conscious Mind. In one view *Siris* may be looked at as a gracefully contrived Commonplace Book, into which the fruits of the learned meditation of Berkeley's whole previous life, regarding the sensible world and its spiritual cause, were gathered, and in which, with earnest and eloquent reiteration, they are expressed more in a contemplative than in an argumentative spirit and form. It is a chain of aphorisms, in which the connexion is produced by the quaintest and most subtle associations. The speculations of the deepest thinkers, ancient and modern, blend themselves with the successive links, and the whole forms a series of studies, as well in physical science as in Greek and Eastern philosophy.

When we pass into *Siris* from the three juvenile tracts in which Berkeley reasoned out, with an enthusiasm still fervid in his advanced age, his theory of vision, and his doctrine of the ideal or phenomenal nature of sensible things, we find ourselves transported from Locke's practical to the Platonic, or Neoplatonic, dialectical and physical point of view; also to the ancient conception of a gradation in existence, and of the constant animation of the whole material world. We exchange the society of the courageous young Dublin student, joyfully awakened to a great discovery, which was for ever to expel mere abstractions from science, for that of the matured companion of ancient sages, who had been taught by much philosophical experience that one 'who would make a real progress in knowledge, must dedicate his age as well as youth, the later growth as well as the first fruits, at the altar of truth;' and who had also gradually learned that 'through the dusk of our gross atmosphere,' in this life of sense, 'the sharpest eye cannot see clearly.'

This modification of tone, and the particular occasion of its mani-

festation in an essay suggested by tar-water, are both explained when we review the circumstances in which *Siris* originated. During the sixteen years which preceded its publication, Berkeley lived much alone, among his books, first in Rhode Island, and afterwards in his secluded diocese of Cloyne; for the most part too in indifferent health. In his study, Plato and the Neoplatonists became his favourite companions; while out of doors, among the poor of his diocese, he was, in these early years of his residence, as we gather from his Correspondence, surrounded in an unusual degree by suffering and disease. We find him in every period of his life fond of natural science, and apt to yield to the very original trains of thought which physical facts raised in his mind. In his 'remote corner' at Cloyne the sufferings of his neighbours suggested the remedy of Tar-water, of which he had heard on the other side of the Atlantic, and which, as he tried it in different kinds of disease, seemed to grow under his hand into a Universal Medicine. 'I do not,' he modestly conjectures[1], 'I do not say that it is a Panacea; I only suspect it to be so—time and trial will show.'

The mere suspicion of a discovery so wonderful—sustained by many alleged facts, and by ingenious reasoning, in the 119 opening sections of *Siris*—was enough to set Berkeley's thoughts agoing about the probable physical cause of tar-water being the cure for our corporeal ills in this prison of the body. Tar, to begin with, is produced from the vegetable world, in modes described (sect. 10—28). This leads him on to an inquiry into Vegetable Life, especially in those organisms, such as pines and firs, from which chiefly tar is produced (sect. 29—38). We are thus, in the opening part of *Siris*, conducted through the region of Vegetable Physiology and Botany, in company with Theophrastus and Pliny, Jonstonus, John Evelyn, and that 'curious anatomist of plants,' Dr. Nehemiah Grew. Firs and pines, we are here told, have this peculiarity, that they secrete copiously an alimentary juice, which consists of oily, aqueous, and saline particles. This, 'by the economy of the plant, and the action of the sun is strained and concocted into an inspissated oil or balsam,'—the oil being in these trees unusually abundant, and also tenacious of the 'acid spirit or vegetable soul;' so that when exalted and enriched by the solar action, it is found to be charged with 'a most noble medicine, the last and best product of a tree perfectly maturated by time and sun' (sect. 38). Cures, in an immense variety of diseases, are accord-

[1] *First Letter to Thomas Prior, on the Virtues of Tar-water.* Sect. 22.

ingly attributed to this Vegetable Acid, when it has been drawn from tar by the menstruum of water (sect. 2—7, 60—119).

Meditation upon the 'acid spirit or vegetable soul,' 'sheathed in its thin volatile oil,' so readily withdrawn from tar by water, opens the way to more general questions about Acids or Volatile Salts. We are thus brought (sect. 120) to chemical phenomena and their laws, and are led in the following sections to theorize in Chemistry. Appeals are made to Sir Isaac Newton, Böerhaave, Homberg, and Boyle, as chemical authorities on the doctrine of acids, alkalis, and salts (sect. 126—136). Some curious, old-fashioned chemistry, derived in a great measure from Homberg, is offered to the reader in this part of *Siris*, as well as in what follows.

As 'the acid spirit or salt, that mighty instrument in the hand of nature,' is supposed to reside in Air, and to be diffused through that whole element, the train of thought next passes through the atmosphere (sect. 137—151)—'the receptacle as well as source of all sublunary forms'—'the common seminary of all vivifying principles.' Air is assumed, according to an ancient opinion, to be 'a collection or treasury of active principles, through which a latent vivifying spirit is diffused'—the unique ingredient on which life immediately depends. The heterogeneous elements of the atmosphere are, it is alleged, united by this active, subtle substance—called invisible Fire, Light, Æther, or the Vital Spirit of the Universe—with which the Acid extracted by water from tar is charged.

We pass, accordingly, (sect. 152) from the physical speculation of Air to the physical and semi-metaphysical speculation of this invisible Fire or Æther—the vital spirit of the whole sensible universe, the principle which corresponds in Nature—the *macrocosm*, to the animal spirit in Man—the *microcosm* (sect. 152—165). The ancient biological conception of the universe with its universal soul (*anima mundi*) is then accommodated to this 'Philosophy of Fire,' and contrasted with the lifeless, mechanical science against which Berkeley everywhere protests. Much of his curious learning is employed (sect. 166—205) in defending a supreme physical science of Vitalized Fire. Some of the highest authorities are adduced—Heraclitus (its chief source in Greece), Plato, the Peripatetics, Theophrastus, the Stoics, Plotinus, the Hermic writers, and Hippocrates, not to speak of the Eastern philosophers, among the ancients; with Sir Isaac Newton, Homberg, Böerhaave, Hales, Nieuwentyt, and Dr. Willis, among other moderns. Berkeley tells us elsewhere[2]

[2] See *First Letter to Thomas Prior, on the Virtues of Tar-water*. Sect. 16.

that he had 'for a long time entertained an opinion, agreeable to the sentiments of many ancient philosophers—that Fire may be regarded as the Animal Spirit of this visible world.' How he came to entertain this opinion he does not say. It is in *Siris* that it first distinctly appears in his works. Vital Fire is there the physical chain by which all sensible changes are concatenated.

For, this Fire or Æther—this 'luminous spirit'—is still with him corporeal and physical, not incorporeal and metaphysical (sect. 206—213); although it is all pervading, and governed by wonderful laws assigned to it on ancient and modern authority. In various modes and degrees, it is diffused through plants; and, especially after 'a lodgment in the native balsam of pines and firs,' it finds its way benignly and beneficially into the human constitution, so as to 'warm without heating, to cheer but not inebriate' (sect. 217). We are warned that Sir Isaac Newton's elastic Æther is not to be confounded with this invisible animated Fire or Æther; nor is this last subject to those laws of attraction and repulsion which play the governing part in the Newtonian physics (sect. 221—230).

Thus far Berkeley's Chain is physical. But he takes for granted that a chain that is only this cannot support itself. Neither elastic Æther, nor Attraction and Repulsion can in themselves really account for natural changes, whether mechanical, chemical, or vital. All sensible phenomena, with all their merely physical or instrumental causes, presuppose the perpetual operation of Intelligence (sect. 231—238; see also sect. 153, 155, 160, 161). Philosophy, properly so called, must be spiritual and not mechanical; the facts and laws of physical science are but the sensible or contingent expression of Divine Thoughts (sect. 251—264). Active Intelligence is, in short, with Berkeley, the only summary or metaphysical explanation of the universe. Supreme Mind alone is the 'golden chain' of a Catholic Philosophy.

The last hundred sections of *Siris* accumulate ancient authorities on behalf of this spiritual principle, which, in its eccentric transformations, here appears reflected through the greatest minds of the ancient world. These sections connect, by suggestion, early with recent speculation—the anticipations of Pythagoras, Parmenides, Plato, and Plotinus with their developments in the modern German thought of Leibnitz, Schelling, and Hegel. The last hundred sections of *Siris* are probably the nearest approach by native British mind in last century to Philosophy

according to the conception of these ancient and modern sages. In each section a grain of gold may be found, and the grains multiply as we advance. In this whole stratum we find ourselves in the very centre of the auriferous deposit.

Absolute Space and sensible Space—blind Fate and spiritual Fate—*Anima Mundi*—Pantheism and Atheism—the antithesis and synthesis of Sense and Intelligence—the actual and the potential existence of Matter—Deity, with the origin and various phases of that conception—divine and human Personality—the Divine Ideas of Platonism—the Trinity of Personality, Reason, and Life, are all pondered in succession; and the reader is carried through the reported thought, on these deep themes, of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Plotinus, Jamblicus, Proclus, Themistius, Simplicius, and the Hermic writers.

Berkeley, first of all, discerns the outlines of his own spiritual theory of the sensible universe in the dim intuitions of ancient Greek and Egyptian philosophy (sect. 266—269), with which he feels more in harmony than with the mechanical and materialistic science by which he was surrounded in his own age and country. The ancient notions of Space and of Fate, for instance, seem to him deeper than the modern, and naturally open to a spiritual interpretation (sect. 270—273).

In the modern 'phantom' of an absolute or uncreated Space, when distinguished from visible and tangible extension—derived neither from sense nor intellect (sect. 271—318), and therefore with Berkeley a mere negation, the result of λογισμὸς νόθος (sect. 306, 318)—he sees the source of the other modern 'phantoms' of irrelative Matter, and blind Fate—'children of imagination grafted upon sense' (sect. 292)—with all their sceptical and immoral consequences. He even prefers, as more spiritual, the inclination of the early thinkers to personify the universe, or at least to represent it as animated (sect. 273—287); seeing in this at the worst a one-sided expression of his own favourite doctrine of an immediate and perpetually acting Divine Providence. The doctrine of an *Anima Mundi*, presented in various forms by Egyptian, Greek, and Alexandrian philosophy, harmonizes with his adopted theory of an animating Fire, 'the living, omniform, seminary of the world;' and also with the uniform teaching of his life, as to the impossibility of Matter being a cause, and the need for referring all sensible changes to the agency of Mind. God, or Supreme Mind, is thus (as it were) the Intelligible Soul of the world, by whose perpetual and pervading activity all things are connected in the unity of a Golden Chain—the complicated links of which human science, with weak and faltering hand, tries to display in their true order.

In this conception of the universe, all things centre in the unity of Mind, which substantiates and causes all. This is really Τὸ Ἕν—THE ONE—of the ancient Egyptians and Greeks (sect. 287—295), which is to all created beings the source of unity and identity, of harmony and order, existence and stability. 'It is neither acid nor salt, nor sulphur, nor air, nor æther, nor visible corporeal fire, much less the phantom fate or necessity, that is the real agent, but, by a certain analysis, a regular connexion and climax, we ascend through all these mediums to a glimpse of the First Mover, invisible, incorporeal, unextended, intellectual source of life and being' (sect. 296).

Thus, by a Chain of many links, we pass from the one extreme of gross Sense, to the other extreme of pure Intelligence; the relations or truths of which last are a new and really divine object of contemplation. Accordingly, after the example of great authorities among the ancients, ill relished perhaps by modern readers, Berkeley proceeded, in what at the outset was a book in physics, to ponder the metaphysical and divine; drawing his reader, 'by insensible transitions, into remote inquiries and speculations, that were perhaps not thought of, either by him or by the author, at first setting out' (sect. 297).

'Theology and Philosophy gently unbind the ligaments that chain the soul down to the earth, and assist her flight toward the sovereign good' (sect. 302). Let us then, Berkeley says in effect in what follows, let us rise from our fallen state by meditating with the theological philosopher on that contrast and yet correlation of Sense and Intelligence, Being and Knowing, the Many and the One, Changes and the Permanent, the Individual and the Universal, which lies at the root of whatever is, and which, in these and like modes of conception, has engaged the deepest thinkers in distant ages and countries (sect. 301—310). Plato and Aristotle, as he interprets them, did not assign to sensible things an absolute existence, abstracted from all conscious Intelligence. With those ancient sages, Matter is at the most a blind, indefinable negation, which, even with Aristotle, has in itself only a potential, not an actual existence (sect. 311—319). 'Neither Plato nor Aristotle,' he concludes, 'by Matter understood corporeal substance.' To them it signified no positive, actual being. According to these philosophers, Matter is only *pura potentia* —a mere possibility and defect; and, 'since God is absolute perfection and act, it follows that there is the greatest opposition and distance imaginable between God and Matter' (sect. 319).

What then is God? This is the next question which the train of thought suggests. It leads (sect. 320—329) to a restatement of the theory of Power and Causation which runs through, and is the very

essence of all Berkeley's philosophy. A cause is to be distinguished from its effects; and the Supreme Mind, how closely connected soever with the universe of sensible phenomena in which His Ideas are expressed, is not to be confounded with these phenomena. He is 'a really existing Spirit, distinct or separate from all corporeal and sensible things' (sect. 323). A liberal toleration is indeed conceded by Berkeley to the varied forms of words which thoughtful men, in the different religions of the world, have used to express the correlation of God and the finite universe, and these closing sections of *Siris* foreshadow comparative theology. If we should even say that all things make one God, this would, he thinks, be perhaps a misleading way of expressing the truth, but should not be regarded as atheistic, 'so long as Mind or Intellect was admitted to be τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the governing part' (sect. 288). 'It is nevertheless,' he adds, 'more respectful, and consequently the truer notion of God, to suppose Him neither made up of parts, nor to be Himself a part of any Whole whatever.' When we find Platonic and Aristotelian philosophers speaking of God as 'mixing with' or 'pervading' nature and the elements, he explains this as referring not to a commixture in the way of space or extension, but in the way of pervasive power, or universal Providence. For, the term *extension* is never applied to mind by Plato and Aristotle, spiritual things being with them 'distant' from one another not by *place* but, as Plotinus says, by '*alterity*' (sect. 329).

As the best help in the endeavour to rise in contemplation above the selfish feeling and mechanical habit of thought which an exclusive study of sensible things is apt to generate, Berkeley, with earnest eloquence, points to the books of the ancient philosophers, and above all to Plato, 'whose writings are the touchstone of a hasty and shallow mind' (sect. 332). In the remaining sections of *Siris*, devoted as they are to meditation upon the Supreme Essence, he moves throughout in company with Parmenides and Plato, Plotinus and Proclus, and not without many allusions to the curious Hermic lore which seemed somehow to have a fascination for him in his old age.

In the Ideas of Plato he thinks he discerns the beginning of a course of thought which reconciles philosophy with theology (sect. 335—338). Here the phenomenal Nominalism for which the early philosophy of Berkeley has been celebrated is modified and supplemented by a Platonic or transcendental Realism, in which are dimly discerned the uncreated necessities of Being, which cannot themselves be represented in the sensuous imagination, but by which the evolutions of the phenomenal world, and of the individual mind, must be regulated. The Realism of uncaused, because necessary, truth is dimly brought before us in this

part of *Siris*. The Platonic Ideas are not—like those of Locke, or like Berkeley's own 'ideas' or 'phænomena' of sense, whose *esse* is *percipi*—'inert, inactive objects of perception.' They are self-existent, necessary, uncreated principles. Nor are they the abstract general ideas against which he had argued in the Introduction to the *Principles of Human Knowledge*. As 'abstract,' these excluded, it was supposed, all attributes not contained in the meaning of the class name; yet, as 'ideas,' *i. e.* singular representations, each idea had to include all the possible individuals in which the common attributes might be found. The inconsistency of this attempt to universalize individuals, to necessitate the contingent, was sufficiently exposed by Berkeley. But Plato's Universals are 'the most real beings, intellectual and unchangeable; and therefore more real than the fleeting, transient objects of sense; which, wanting stability, cannot be objects of science, much less of intellectual knowledge' (sect. 335). 'The most refined human intellect, exerted to its utmost reach, can only seize some imperfect glimpses of the Divine Ideas, abstracted from all things corporeal, sensible, and imaginable. Therefore Pythagoras and Plato treated them in a mysterious manner, concealing rather than exposing them to vulgar eyes; so far were they from thinking that those abstract things, although the most real, were the fittest to influence common minds, or become principles of knowledge, not to say duty and virtue, to the generality of mankind' (sect. 337). 'Nevertheless, as the mind gathers strength by repeated acts, we should not despond, but continue to exert the prime and flower of our faculties, still recovering and reaching on, and struggling into the upper region' (sect. 341).

We are asked to try, in this manner, to rise even above the thought of a Universal Spirit, the supreme cause of life and motion, or of a Universal Mind, enlightening and ordering all things; and to enter into the meaning of the ancient tenet of τὸ ἓν or τὸ ἀγαθὸν—the *fons Deitatis*—the First Hypostasis in the Divinity—by participation in which all besides was supposed to exist, the finite spirits of men included. For Plato thought that in the soul of man, 'prior and superior to intellect, there is somewhat of a higher nature, by virtue of which we are *one*, and that, by virtue of our *one*, we are most closely joined to Deity' (sect 345).

What is τὸ ἓν, thus in a manner common to ourselves and God? Is it not PERSONALITY? It seems that 'personality is the indivisible centre of the soul or mind, which is a monad so far forth as she is a Person. Therefore Person is really that which exists; inasmuch as it alone participates of the divine Unity . . . Upon mature reflection the Person or Mind of all created beings seemeth alone indivisible, and to

partake most of unity. Sensible things are rather considered one (by an act of intelligence) than truly so; they being in a perpetual flux or succession, ever differing and various' (346, 347). Here we find ourselves returning into Berkeley's early philosophy of spiritual or personal phenomenalism — a universe of 'ideas' or 'phænomena,' ultimately dependent upon Persons.

But τὸ ἓν—THE ONE—this abstract personality seems to exclude conscious intellect or mind, to which it is assumed to be prior. Is not this virtual Atheism—at most the πρώτη ὕλη of Aristotle? Berkeley answers (sect. 352) that, in the Ancient doctrine, this ultimate personality is necessarily connected with νοῦς or λόγος as a Second Hypostasis. These two Hypostases are inseparable in the Absolute Being or Deity. 'There never was a time supposed wherein τὸ ἓν subsisted without intellect (λόγος); the *priority* having been understood as a priority of order or conception, but not a priority of age' (sect. 352). Now, whoever recognizes that the universe is thus grounded on Eternal Mind 'cannot be justly deemed an Atheist.'

Intellect (νοῦς or λόγος), abstracted from life, is, however, as barren as personality (τὸ ἓν), abstracted from intellect. Both must participate in life. The supreme substance and cause must be a living or conscious spirit. Conscious Life or Spirit (ψυχή) is accordingly the Third Hypostasis in the ancient Trinity of Being. 'Certain it is,' he says, 'that the notion of this Trinity is to be found in the writings of many old heathen philosophers, that is to say, a notion of Three Divine Hypostases. Authority, light, and life did, to the eye of reason, plainly appear to support, pervade, and animate the mundane system or *macrocosm*. The same appeared in the *microcosm*, preserving soul and body, enlightening the mind, and moving the affections. And these were conceived to be necessary, universal principles, co-existing and co-operating in such sort as never to exist asunder, but on the contrary to constitute One Sovereign of all things. And, indeed, how could Power or Authority avail or subsist without Knowledge? or either without Life and Action?' (sect. 361.)

Supreme Being must be Divine Thought in a Living Person. With this Trinity in the very essence of Being *Siris* concludes. Its closing sentences condense the protest against selfish and degrading Materialism which so eloquently runs through it, and speak in favour of the deeper and truer life that descends in the glimpses of the Divine and Eternal opened to us in Theology and Philosophy, but which, after all the discipline of reflection, our limited and sense-clogged reason can only imperfectly apprehend.

Any attempt strictly to arrange in Parts the 368 sections in which the successive links of this Golden Chain of thought are offered would involve an unnatural distortion, spoiling the grace and beauty of the refined transitions in which the work abounds. But the following rough classification may be convenient for the reader:

A. Sect. 1—119 may be regarded as a First Part, concerned chiefly with tar, tar-water, tar-vegetation, and the cures in manifold diseases which Berkeley attributes to his 'water of health'—not to the exclusion, however, of occasional anticipations even in these sections of the more advanced links in the chain.

B. Sect. 120—230, which we may call the Second Part, place before us the successive physical links which bring the vulgar commodity of tar in sight of the supremacy of Mind—a supremacy which indeed is intimated in anticipative jets of metaphysical speculation here and there in the course of these very sections.

C. Finally, sect. 231—368 may be read as the Third, and properly metaphysical, Part of *Siris*. Here Berkeley's metaphysical theory of the physical universe pervaded by spiritual power is, in the first place, stated (sect. 201—264); then (sect. 265—368) vindicated, and further unfolded, with help from the ancient sages.

Thus in *Siris* Physics merge in Metaphysics. And obscurity in the physical chain need not intercept the metaphysical light which discovers the concatenation of Reason in all things. *Siris* recalls in this as in other ways the *Timæus* of Plato, so often referred to in its pages. Its summary doctrine of a sense-universe substantiated in, and causally animated by Mind, of whose Ideas the laws of the sensible world are the expression, does not disappear in any errors of physical science that it happens to contain. These imply only a mistaken interpretation of the divine meaning, not that there is no divine meaning to be interpreted.

The suggestive title *Siris*[3] (σειρά, a band or chain) was first given to the treatise in the second edition, published a few weeks after the first.

[3] '*Seiris*,' De Quincey says, 'ought to have been the name.'

The notion of the Chain in Nature is one which strangely runs through ancient and modern science and philosophy, from Homer and Pythagoras, through Plato and Proclus, to Bacon, Leibnitz, and Berkeley. It is prominent in the Hermic writings, and also in Paracelsus, being a favourite with the alchemists.

Some curious gleanings on this subject may be found in *Notes and Queries*, Second Series, vol. iii. pp. 63—65, 81—84, 104—107—an essay on the *Aurea Catena Homeri*, a rare work published in Germany early in last century. Its author, according to this account, 'follows the Egyptians and most ancient sages in regarding Nature as a series of rings or revolving circles, forming a vast Chain, which links the Deity with His humblest creature.' It is added, however, that he deals not so much with this scale of creatures as with 'the Protean Chain of metamorphoses and transmutations, which

The first edition appeared in April, 1744—in London, 'printed for C. Hitch, in Pater-noster-row; and C. Davis, against Gray's Inn, Holbourn.'

The medical celebrity of the work was extraordinary in the five or six years after its appearance. At least three editions seem to have been called for in 1744. Others succeeded in 1746 and 1748.

Several of these editions have been collated for the present work. I have also given the more important references, and added a few illustrative annotations. With a text so suggestive as *Siris*, the annotations might have been indefinitely extended.

A French translation of *Siris* appeared at Amsterdam in 1745. It is entitled *Recherches sur les Vertus de l'eau de goudron, ou l'on a joint des Reflexions Philosophiques sur divers autres sujets importans.* Berkeley's *First Letter to Mr. Prior* is translated in this volume, which also includes a letter addressed to the author of the German translation of *Siris*. This French translation is referred to in the *Acta Eruditorum*, Leips. 1746, pp. 446—449.

Part of *Siris* was translated into German at Gottengen in 1746—the part which relates to the preparation and medicinal properties of tar-water—along with several tracts on the same subject. Berkeley's *Letters* to Mr. Prior were also translated, and the volume contains an account of some German analyses of tar-water[4].

Mr. Prior, in his *Treatise on the Effects of Tar Water* (p. 146), mentions translations of *Siris* into Low Dutch and Portuguese, which, as well as the French and German translations, must have been in circu-

unites in one the dyads or bipolarities of life and death, generation and corruption conception and regeneration, coagulation and dissolution, evaporation and condensation, volatilization and fixation,' &c. The affinity between this Chain and speculations about transmutation, universal or elementary matter, and the notions of Paracelsus is obvious. And Berkeley repeatedly refers in *Siris* to the Paracelsic chemistry.

The subject is pursued in *Notes and Queries*, Second Series, vol. xii. 161—163, 181—183, where the writer (p. 163) suggests that it was with reference to the *Aurea Catena Homeri*, 'that Bishop Berkeley wrote and named that most strange yet most choice composition, his *Siris;* which, "announced as an Essay on Tar-water, begins with Tar and ends with the Trinity, the *omne scibile* forming the interspace;" an essay which, in spite of the Tar-water, must delight the heart of every Platonist.'

Berkeley's Chain or Scale in *Siris* is the gradation of physical effects linked to physical causes, in successively ascending circles, from tar-water up to the Supreme Mind, of whose efficiency all physical causes are merely the passive instruments and interpretable signs. According to *Siris*, this chain of physical causes, which are in turn effects, is at last physically enchained by invisible Fire, itself connected as an effect with the Supreme Active Intelligence. So Bacon:—'When a man seeth the dependence of causes, and the works of Providence, then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of Nature's Chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair.'—(*Adv. of Learning*, p. 12.)

[4] I have not seen this work. I am indebted for an account of it to Dr. Ueberweg, the distinguished Professor of Logic and Metaphysics, at Königsberg. It is curious that the metaphysical part of *Siris*, connected both with ancient Greek and post-Kantian German speculation, seems never to have been offered to the philosophers of Germany in their own language.

lation in 1746. The Dutch version was published at Amsterdam in 1745. Of the Portuguese I have not been able to obtain any account.

The use of tar-water as a medicine soon became widely known in Europe. In fact, no work of Berkeley's produced so extensive and sudden a sensation as *Siris*. This was not on account of its train of profound metaphysical thought, but because it seemed to offer a Catholic remedy for the physical diseases of mankind, and even for intellectual and moral disorder. The extraordinary and not unnatural popular interest is evident in many contemporary allusions. 'It is impossible,' says Mr. Duncombe, writing to Archbishop Herring in June, 1744, 'it is impossible to write a letter now without tincturing the ink with tar-water. This is the common topic of discourse, both among the rich and poor, high and low; and the Bishop of Cloyne has made it as fashionable as going to Vauxhall or Ranelagh . . . . However, the faculty in general, and the whole posse of apothecaries are very angry both with the author and the book, which makes many people suspect it is a good thing.' To which Herring, writing a few days after, from York, rejoins,—'Though we are so backward in some sorts of intelligence, we are perfectly acquainted with the virtues of tar-water; some have been cured as they think, and some made sick by it; and I do think it is a defect in the good bishop's recommendation of it, that he makes it a Catholicon; but I daresay he is confident he believes it such.'

Siris was the occasion of a considerable body of contemporary literature, in the form of controversial tracts and articles. These were confined to its medical doctrines, and several of them were due to the 'anger' of 'the faculty' with an ecclesiastical intruder, whose Universal Medicine threatened to supersede them in their own province.

Berkeley defended and further illustrated the virtues of Tar-water in three *Letters* to his friend Thomas Prior, written in 1744, 1746, and 1747; in a *Letter* to Dr. Hales in 1747; and in his *Further Thoughts on Tar Water* in 1752—all which are contained in vol. iii. pp. 459—507, of this edition of his works.

His old friend Thomas Prior was as unwearied as the bishop himself in vindicating the new medicine, and in proclaiming its virtues in innumerable diseases. He communicated instances of cures to the *Dublin Journal* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*, soon after the first appearance of *Siris*. In July, 1744, he published *An Authentic Narrative, containing a record of various Cases illustrative of the Virtues of Tar Water*. This was the germ of his larger work—*An Authentic Narrative of the Success of Tar Water in curing a great number and variety of Distempers; with Remarks and Occasional Papers relative to the Subject*, which appeared

in 1746[5]. Berkeley's *First Letter* and *Second Letter to Mr. Prior* are subjoined to this *Narrative*, which itself occupies 168 pages, and records some hundreds of cases of actual or supposed cures. It was dedicated to the famous Earl of Chesterfield, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

About two months after *Siris* appeared, a tract was published, for the direction of patients in different diseases, 'by the Proprietors of the Tar-water Warehouse, behind the Thatched House Tavern, in St. James's Street,' entitled, *The Medical Virtues of Tar-Water fully explained, by the Right Rev. Dr. George Berkeley, Lord Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland. To which is added, the Receipt for making it, and Instructions to know by the colour and taste of the Water when the Tar is good and of the right sort. Together with a plain Explanation of the Bishop's physical Terms.* Dublin and London, 1744.

The more important of the other tracts in the Tar-water Controversy are the following:—

1. *Anti-Siris; or English Wisdom exemplified by various examples, but particularly the present demand for Tar-water, on so unexceptionable authority as that of a R——t R——d itinerant Chemist, and Graduate in Divinity and Metaphysics. In a Letter from a Foreign Gentleman at London to his Friend abroad.* This tract of 80 pp., which appeared in May, 1744, was one of the earliest attacks upon the new medicine.

2. *A Letter to the Right Rev. the Bishop of Cloyne, occasioned by His Lordship's Treatise on the Virtues of Tar-water. Impartially examining how far that medicine deserves the character his Lordship has given of it.* London (June), 1744. A second edition appeared later in the same year. It was criticised in

3. *An Answer to a Letter to the Right Rev. the Bishop of Cloyne, occasioned by his Treatise of Tar-water.* July, 1744.

4. *Reflections concerning the Virtues of Tar-water. Wherein it is proved by experience that the present preparation is not founded on philosophical principles, and that, as now prepared, it may probably occasion more disease than it can possibly cure. With hints for its improvement, so as to make it a pleasant and efficacious medicine.* By H. Jackson, chemist. London (June), 1744.

5. *Siris in the Shades: A Dialogue concerning Tar-Water.* July, 1744.

6. *A Cure for the Epidemical Madness of drinking Tar-water, lately imported from Ireland by a certain R——t R——d Doctor. In a Letter to his Lordship.* By T. R., M.D. 66 pp. London (July), 1744.

7. *The Bishop of Cloyne defended, and Tar-water proved useful by theory and experiment. In answer to T. R., M.D.* By Philanthropos. *Ecce vox Naturæ, vox Dei.* London (August), 1744.

[5] The running title of Prior's work is, *An Authentic Account of the Effects of Tar Water.*

8. *Remarks on the Bishop of Cloyne's Siris.* By Risorius, M.A., of Oxford. London (November), 1744.

9. *An Account of Some Experiments and Observations on Tar-water: wherein is shown the quantity of Tar that is therein. Which was read before the Royal Society.* By Stephen Hales, D.D., F.R.S. London (December), 1744. A second edition of this tract appeared in 1747, having appended to it

10. *A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Hales, concerning the Nature of Tar, and a Method of obtaining its medical virtues, free from its hurtful oils: wherein also the strength of each dose may be the better ascertained.* By A. Reid, Esq. Dated, London, March 25, 1747.

11. *A Proposal for the improvement of the practice of Medicine. Illustrated by an example relative to the Small Pox. The second edition, with an Appendix containing more examples. To which is added a Discourse on Medicinal Indications, Specifics, Panaceas, wherein are introduced Some Remarks on a book entitled 'Siris, or the Properties of Tar-water.'* By Malcolm Flemyng, M.D. Printed by the Author at Hull, by G. Ferriby, 1748.

12. *Reflections upon Catholicons or Universal Medicines.* By Thomas Knight, M.D. London, 1749.

After Berkeley's death, in 1753, the Tar-water Controversy gradually subsided, but the virtue of tar, variously prepared, in different diseases, is still recognised by physicians[6]. The present interest of *Siris*, however, is metaphysical rather than physical. The claim of tar-water to be a Universal Medicine is not now put forward, but the results of the train of thought to which the virtues of this supposed Catholicon gave rise in Berkeley's mind are even more worthy of study now than they were in the middle of last century, in consequence of the restoration of Greek philosophy, and the formations of German speculation which have occupied the intervening period.

A. C. F.

[6] Dr. Cullen, in his *Materia Medica* (vol. II. p. 334), written in 1789, when the rage for tar-water had ceased, says that the commendations of its patrons were often 'extravagant and ill founded;' but that those who disparaged it, while they 'had some foundation for their opinions, told many falsehoods about it.' He acknowledges its usefulness in many diseases. Its virtues he attributes to the vegetable acid contained in the tar, and extracted from it by water. This opinion, he says, is confirmed by Mr. Reid (in his *Letter to Dr. Hales*) who quotes Glauber and Böerhaave in support of the virtues of the acid.

A watery extract of tar contains ascetic acid, carbolic acid, and creosote. Tar itself is the volatile matter obtained by the distillation of wood, and is a very complex mixture of elements, which differ in volatility; e. g. ascetic acid, light and heavy oil of tar, and pitch. Most of them are insoluble in water.

[[1]SIRIS:

A CHAIN OF]

PHILOSOPHICAL REFLEXIONS AND INQUIRIES

CONCERNING

THE VIRTUES OF TAR-WATER,

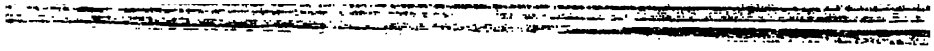
AND DIVERS OTHER SUBJECTS CONNECTED TOGETHER

AND ARISING ONE FROM ANOTHER.

As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men.—GAL. vi. 10.
Hoc opus, hoc studium, parvi properemus et ampli.—HOR.

1744.

[1] Added in second edition.



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[[1]SIRIS:]

A CHAIN OF PHILOSOPHICAL REFLEXIONS AND INQUIRIES, &c.

For Introduction to the following piece, I assure the reader that nothing could, in my present situation, have induced me to be at the pains of writing it, but a firm belief that it would prove a valuable present to the public. What entertainment soever the reasoning or notional part may afford the Mind, I will venture to say, the other part seemeth so surely calculated to do good to the Body that both must be gainers. For, if the lute be not well tuned, the musician fails of his harmony. And, in our present state, the operations of the mind so far depend on the right tone or good condition of its instrument, that anything which greatly contributes to preserve or recover the health of the Body is well worth the attention of the Mind. These considerations have moved me to communicate to the public the salutary virtues of Tar-water; to which I thought myself indispensably obliged by the duty every man owes to mankind. And, as effects are linked with their causes, my thoughts on this low but useful theme led to farther inquiries, and those on to others, remote perhaps and speculative, but I hope not altogether useless or unentertaining.

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1. In certain parts of America[2], Tar-water is made by putting a quart of cold water to a quart of tar, and stirring them well together in a vessel, which is left standing till the tar sinks to the

[1] Added in second edition. [2] Cf. sect. 2, 17.

bottom. A glass of [3clear] water, being poured off for a draught, is replaced by the same quantity of fresh water, the vessel being shaken and left to stand as before. And this is repeated for every glass, so long as the tar continues to impregnate the water sufficiently, which [4appears] by the smell and taste. — But, as this method produceth tar-water of [5a nauseous kind, and] different degrees of strength, I choose to make it in the following manner: —Pour a gallon of cold water on a quart of tar, and stir, [5work,] and mix them thoroughly [5together], with a [5wooden] ladle or flat stick, for the space of [6five or six] minutes; after which the vessel must stand [5close covered and unmoved] [7three days and nights], that the tar may have [5full] time to subside; and then the clear water, [5having been first carefully skimmed without shaking the vessel], is to be poured off, and kept [5in bottles well stopped] for use[8], no more being made from the same tar, which may still serve for common [9uses].

2. [10The] cold infusion of tar hath been used in some of our Colonies[11], as a preservative or preparative against the small-pox, which foreign practice induced me to try it in my own neighbourhood, when the small-pox raged with great violence. And the trial fully answered my expectation: all those within my knowledge who took the tar-water having either escaped that distemper, or had it very favourably. In one family there was a remarkable instance of seven children, who came all very well through the

[3] Omitted in the later editions.

[4] 'will appear'—in early editions.

[5] Added in the later editions.

[6] 'three or four'—in the early editions.

[7] 'eight and forty hours' — in the early editions.

[8] [I make this water stronger than that first prescribed in *Siris*, having found, on more general experience, that five or six minutes' stirring, when the water is carefully cleared and skimmed, agrees with most stomachs.]—AUTHOR. This note was added in the later editions.

[9] 'uses'—'purposes'—in the early editions. The manner of making tar-water, as well as the quality of the tar, is a very important consideration with Berkeley; cf. sect. 115. See also his *First Letter to Thomas Prior*, sect. 2; *Second Letter*, sect. 2—5; *Letter to Dr. Hales;* and *Farther Thoughts on Tar-water*—in vol. III. pp. 461—507 of this edition. The variations in the directions given in the successive editions of *Siris*, and also of the other works, are curious. Establishments for the manufacture of tar-water, according to Berkeley's rules, were opened in London, Dublin, Göttengen, and elsewhere, soon after the appearance of *Siris*.

[10] 'This'—in the early editions.

[11] He refers to our American Colonies (cf. sect. 17), where tar-water was used medicinally among the Indians and others, as he seems to have learned in Rhode Island. His trial of the remedy when small-pox prevailed at Cloyne, and its apparent efficacy in various diseases (sect. 4—7), suggested the profound physical and metaphysical speculation of *Siris*.

small-pox, except one young child which could not be brought to drink tar-water as the rest had done.

3. Several were preserved from taking the small-pox by the use of this liquor; others had it in the mildest manner; and others, that they might be able to take the infection, were obliged to intermit drinking the tar-water. I have found it may be drunk with great safety and success for any length of time, and this not only before, but also during the distemper. The general rule for taking it is—about half a pint night and morning on an empty stomach, which quantity may be varied, according to the case and age of the patient, provided it be always taken on an empty stomach, and about two hours before or after a meal. [[12]For children and squeamish persons it may be made weaker, or given little and often; more water or less stirring makes it weaker, as less water or more stirring makes it stronger. It should not be lighter than French, nor deeper coloured than Spanish white wine. If a spirit be not very sensibly perceived on drinking, either the tar must have been bad, or already used, or the tar-water carelessly made or kept.—Particular experience will best shew how much and how strong the stomach can bear, and what are the properest times for taking it. I apprehend no danger from excess in the use of this medicine.]

4. It seemed probable that a medicine of such efficacy in a distemper attended with so many purulent ulcers might be also useful in other foulnesses of the blood; accordingly, I tried it on several persons infected with cutaneous eruptions and ulcers, who were soon relieved, and soon after cured. Encouraged by these successes, I ventured to advise it in the foulest distempers, wherein it proved much more successful than salivations and wood drinks had done.

5. Having tried it in a great variety of cases, I found it succeeded beyond my hopes:—in a tedious and painful ulceration of the bowels; in a consumptive cough, and (as appeared by expectorated pus) an ulcer in the lungs; in a pleurisy and peripneumony. And when a person who for some years had been subject to erysipelatous fevers perceived the usual forerunning symptoms to come on, I advised her to drink tar-water, which prevented the erysipelas.

[12] Added in the later editions—the last two sentences in the last. Cf. sect. 115.

6. I never knew anything so good for the stomach[13] as tar-water: it cures indigestion and gives a good appetite. It is an excellent medicine in an asthma. It imparts a kindly warmth and quick circulation to the juices without heating, and is therefore useful, not only as a pectoral and balsamic, but also as a powerful and safe deobstruent in cachetic and hysteric cases. As it is both healing and diuretic, it is very good for the gravel. I believe it to be of great use in dropsy, having known it cure a very bad anasarca in a person whose thirst, though very extraordinary, was in a short time removed by the drinking of tar-water.

7. The usefulness of this medicine in inflammatory cases is evident, from what has been already observed. (Sect. 5.) And yet some perhaps may suspect that, as the tar itself is sulphureous, tar-water must be of a hot and inflaming[14] nature. But it is to be noted that all balsams contain an acid spirit, which is in truth a volatile salt. Water is a menstruum that dissolves all sorts of salts, and draws them from their subjects. Tar, therefore, being a balsam, its salutary acid is extracted by water; which yet is incapable of dissolving its gross resinous parts, whose proper menstruum is spirit of wine. Therefore tar-water, not being impregnated with resin, may be safely used in inflammatory cases: and in fact it hath been found an admirable febrifuge, at once the safest cooler and cordial.

8. The volatile salts[15] separated by infusion from tar, may be supposed to contain its specific virtues. Mr. Boyle and other later chemists are agreed that fixed salts are much the same in all bodies. But it is well known that volatile salts do greatly differ, and the easier they are separated from the subject, the more do

[13] This is repeated by Berkeley in various places. Cf. sect. 21, 68, 80, 87, &c. The tonic properties of tar-water were generally appreciated—as by Dr. Cullen, for instance, in his *Materia Medica*, vol. II. p. 354.

[14] The objection to tar-water, as apt to aggravate fevers and inflammatory diseases, is urged in several of the letters and pamphlets written against the suggested Panacea. Berkeley here replies by anticipation. Cf. sect. 74—79. The objection is often referred to in Berkeley's writings on tar-water, and was afterwards put in fiery language by Dr. Knight, in his *Reflections upon Catholicons*. Mr. Prior, in his *Authentic Narrative* (pp. 159—60), quotes a letter by 'Dr. De Linden, a German physician now in London,' (see *Further Thoughts on Tar-water*, vol. III. pp. 506, 507), in refutation of the error—by him erroneously attributed to *Siris* itself—that tar-water is heating, and tends to produce inflammation in the blood.

[15] Cf. sect. 123.

they possess of its specific qualities. Now, the most easy separation is by the infusion of tar in cold water, which to smell and taste shewing itself well impregnated may be presumed to extract and retain the most pure volatile and active particles of that vegetable balsam.

9. Tar was by the ancients esteemed good against poisons, ulcers, the bites of venomous creatures; also for phthisical, scrofulous, paralytic, and asthmatic persons[16]. But the method of rendering it an inoffensive medicine and agreeable to the stomach—by extracting its virtues in cold water—was unknown to them. The leaves and tender tops of pine and fir are in our times used for diet drinks, and allowed to be antiscorbutic and diuretic. But the most elaborate juice, salt, and spirit of [17 these] evergreens, are to be found in tar; whose virtues extend not to animals alone, but also to vegetables. Mr. Evelyn, in his treatise on *Forest Trees*[18], observes with wonder, that stems of trees, smeared over with tar, are preserved thereby from being hurt by the invenomed teeth of goats, and other injuries, while every other thing of an unctuous nature is highly prejudicial to them.

10. [19]It seems that tar and turpentine may be had, more or less, from all sorts of pines and firs whatsoever; and that the native spirits and essential salts of those vegetables are the same in turpentine and common tar. In effect, this vulgar tar, which cheapness and plenty may have rendered contemptible, appears to be an excellent balsam, containing the virtues of most other balsams; which it easily imparts to water, and by that means readily and inoffensively insinuates them into the habit of the body.

11. The resinous exudations of pines and firs are an important branch of the materia medica, and not only useful in the prescriptions of physicians, but have been also thought otherwise con-

[16] See Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* lib. XXIV. c. 22–26. It seems that the first use of tar was medicinal.

[17] 'those'—in the early editions.

[18] *Sylva: or a Discourse on Forest Trees, and the Propagation of Timber in His Majesty's Dominions* (1664). John Evelyn, (1620—1706)—'Sylva Evelyn'—the characteristic English gentleman and royalist of his time, eminent in natural science, and also in philanthropic service. His interesting *Memoirs*, published in 1818, are well known.

[19] The sources of the resins, vegetable tar, pitch, and turpentine, as well as various modes of procuring them, in ancient and modern times, are mentioned in sect. 10—28.

ducive to health. Pliny[20] tells us that wines in the time of the old Romans were medicated with pitch and resin; and Jonstonus in his *Dendrographia*[21] observes, that it is wholesome to walk in groves of pine-trees, which impregnate the air with balsamic particles. That all turpentines and resins are good for the lungs, against gravel also and obstructions, is no secret. And that the medicinal properties of those drugs are found in tar-water, without heating the blood, or disordering the stomach, is confirmed by experience; and particularly, that phthisical and asthmatic persons receive speedy and great relief from the use of it.

12. Balsams, as all unctuous and oily medicines, create a nauseating in the stomach. They cannot therefore be taken in substance so much or so long as to produce all those salutary effects, which, if thoroughly mixed with the blood and juices, they would be capable of producing. It must therefore be a thing of great benefit to be able to introduce any requisite quantity of their volatile parts into the finest ducts and capillaries, so as not to offend the stomach, but, on the contrary, to comfort and strengthen it in a great degree.

13. According to Pliny[22], liquid pitch (as he calls it) or tar was obtained by setting fire to billets of old fat pines or firs. The first running was tar, the latter or thicker running was pitch. Theophrastus[23] is more particular: he tells us the Macedonians made huge heaps of the cloven trunks of those trees, wherein the billets were placed erect beside each other: that such heaps or piles of wood were sometimes a hundred and eighty cubits round, and sixty or even a hundred high: and that, having covered them with sods of earth to prevent the flame from bursting forth (in which case the tar was lost), they set on fire those huge heaps of pine or fir, letting the tar and pitch run out in a channel.

14. Pliny[24] saith, it was customary for the ancients to hold

[20] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XIV. c. 25.

[21] *Dendrographias, sive Historiæ Naturalis de arboribus et fruticibus, tam nostri quam peregrini orbis* (Francf., 1662). Joannes Jonstonus, M.D. (1603—1675), a Polish naturalist, author of several works in botany and zoology.

[22] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XVI. c. 22.

[23] *Hist. Plant.* lib. IX. c. 3. This work of Theophrastus, the pupil of Aristotle, referred to in this and in the following sections, is the oldest extant treatise in Botany and Vegetable Physiology. Pliny, so often quoted in this part of *Siris*, who describes more than a thousand species of plants, is the next great authority in chronological order, in this department. Thereafter little progress was made until the study revived in modern times.

[24] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XV. c. 7.

fleeces of wool over the steam of boiling tar, and squeeze the moisture from them, which watery substance was called *pissinum*. Ray[25] will have this to be the same with the *pisselæum* of the ancients; but Hardouin, in his notes on Pliny, thinks the *pisselæum* to have been produced from the cones of cedars. What use they made of these liquors anciently I know not; but it may be presumed they were used in medicine, though at present, for aught I can find, they are not used at all.

15. From the manner of procuring tar (sect. 13) it plainly appears to be a natural production, lodged in the vessels of the tree, whence it is only freed and let loose (not made) by burning. If we may believe Pliny[26], the first running or tar was called *cedrium*, and was of such efficacy to preserve from putrefaction that in Egypt they embalmed dead bodies with it. And to this he ascribes their mummies continuing uncorrupted for so many ages.

16. Some modern writers inform us that tar flows from the trunks of pines and firs, when they are very old, through incisions made in the bark near the root; that pitch is tar inspissated[27]; and both are the oil of the tree grown thick and ripened with age and sun. The trees, like old men, being unable to perspire, and their secretory ducts obstructed, they are, as one may say, choked and stuffed with their own juice.

17. The method used by our Colonies in America for making tar and pitch is in effect the same with that of the ancient Macedonians; as appears from the account given in the *Philosophical Transactions*[28]. And the relation of Leo Africanus[29], who describes, as an eye-witness, the making of tar on Mount Atlas, agrees in substance with the methods used by the Macedonians of old, and the people of New England at this day.

18. Jonstonus, in his *Dendrographia*, is of opinion, that pitch was anciently made of cedar, as well as of the pine and fir

[25] The references here, and in sect. 20, 25, are to the *Historia Plantarum* (1694) of John Ray (1628—1705), the great English naturalist of the 17th century, well known also as author of the *Wisdom of God in the Works of the Creation*. See his *Hist. Plant.* lib. XXV.

[26] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XVI. c. 21.

[27] 'inspissated' — 'thickened' — a term used by Evelyn, also by Bacon and others.

[28] In the *Philos. Trans.*, No. 243, we have an account of the way of making tar at Marseilles. See also No. 228.

[29] In the *Africæ Descriptio* of this learned Moor. Leo (cir. 1470—1530) made extensive journeys in the north of Africa about the beginning of the 16th century. His book has been translated from the original Arabic into various languages. An English version appeared in 1600.

grown old and oily. It should seem indeed that one and the same word was used by the ancients in a large sense, so as to comprehend the juices issuing from all those trees. Tar and all sorts of exudations from evergreens are, in a general acceptation, included under the name resin. Hard coarse resin or dry pitch is made from tar, by letting it blaze till the moisture is spent. Liquid resin is properly an oily viscid juice oozing from the bark of evergreen trees, either spontaneously or by incision. It is thought to be the oil of the bark inspissated by the sun. As it issues from the tree it is liquid, but becomes dry and hard, being condensed by the sun or by fire.

19. According to Theophrastus[30], resin was obtained by stripping off the bark from pines, and by incisions made in the silver fir and the pitch pine. The inhabitants of Mount Ida, he tells us, stripped the trunk of the pine on the sunny side two or three cubits from the ground. He observes that a good pine might be made to yield resin every year; an indifferent every other year; and the weaker trees once in three years; and that three runnings were as much as a tree could bear. It is remarked by the same author that a pine doth not at once produce fruit and resin, but the former only in its youth, the latter in its old age.

20. Turpentine is a fine resin. Four kinds of this are in use. The turpentine of Chios or Cyprus, which flows from the turpentine tree: the Venice turpentine, which is got by piercing the larch tree: the Strasburgh turpentine, which Mr. Ray informs us is procured from the knots of the silver fir; it is fragrant and grows yellow with age: the fourth kind is common turpentine, neither transparent nor so liquid as the former; and this Mr. Ray taketh to flow from the mountain pine. All these turpentines are useful in the same intentions. Theophrastus[31] saith, the best resin or turpentine is got from the *terebinthus* growing in Syria and some of the Greek islands. The next best from the silver fir and pitch pine.

21. Turpentine is on all hands allowed to have great medicinal virtues. Tar and its infusion contain those virtues. Tar-water

[30] *Hist. Plant.* lib. IX. c. 2. A similar account of the way of extracting resin from pine is given by Pliny.

[31] See *Hist. Plant.* lib. IX. c. 2. The passages of Theophrastus referred to, in sect. 25, 28, 39, are in this and the next chapter.

is extremely pectoral and restorative; and, if I may judge from what experience I have had, it possesseth the most valuable qualities ascribed to the several balsams of Peru, of Tolu, of Capivi, and even to the balm of Gilead—such is its virtue in asthmas and pleurisies, in obstructions and ulcerous erosions of the inward parts. Tar in substance mixed with honey I have found an excellent medicine for coughs. Balsams, as hath been already observed, are apt to offend the stomach, but tar-water may be taken without offending the stomach. For the strengthening whereof it is the best medicine I have ever tried.

22. The folly of man rateth things by their scarceness, but Providence hath made the most useful things most common. Among those liquid oily extracts from trees and shrubs which are termed balsams, and valued for medicinal virtues, tar may hold its place as a most valuable balsam. Its fragrancy sheweth that it is possessed of active qualities, and its oiliness that it is fitted to retain them. This excellent balsam may be purchased for a penny a pound, whereas the balsam of Judea, when most plenty, was sold on the very spot that produced it, for double its weight in silver, if we may credit Pliny[32]; who also informs us, that the best balsam of Judea flowed only from the bark, and that it was adulterated with resin and oil of turpentine. Now, comparing the virtues I have experienced in tar with those I find ascribed to the precious balm of Judea, of Gilead, or of Mecha, (as it is diversly called), I am of opinion that the latter is not a medicine of more value or efficacy than the former.

23. Pliny[33] supposed amber to be a resin, and to distil from some species of pine—which he gathered from its smell. Nevertheless, its being dug out of the earth shews it to be a fossil, though of a very different kind from other fossils. But thus much is certain, that the medicinal virtues of amber are to be found in the balsamic juices of pines and firs. Particularly the virtues of the most valuable preparation, I mean salt of amber, are in a great degree answered by tar-water, as a detergent, diaphoretic, and diuretic.

24. There is, as hath been already observed, more or less oil and balsam in all evergreen trees, which retains the acid spirit,

[32] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XII. c. 54. [33] *Ibid.* lib. XXXVII. c. 11.

that principle of life and verdure; the not retaining whereof in sufficient quantity causeth other plants to droop and wither. Of these evergreen trees productive of resin, pitch and tar, Pliny[34] enumerates six kinds in Europe; Jonstonus reckons up thrice that number of the pine and fir family. And, indeed, their number, their variety, and their likeness, make it difficult to be exact.

25. It is remarked, both by Theophrastus and Jonstonus, that trees growing in low and shady places do not yield so good tar[35] as those which grow in higher and more exposed situations. And Theophrastus farther observes, that the inhabitants of Mount Ida in Asia, who distinguish the Idean pine from the maritime, affirm, that the tar flowing from the former is in greater plenty, as well as more fragrant than the other. Hence, it should seem the pines or firs in the mountains of Scotland might be employed that way, and rendered valuable; even where the timber, by its remoteness from water carriage, is of small value. What we call the Scotch fir is falsely so called, being in truth a wild forest pine, and (as Mr. Ray informs us) agreeing much with the description of a pine growing on Mount Olympus in Phrygia, probably the only place where it is found out of these islands; in which of late years it is so much planted and cultivated with so little advantage, while the cedar of Lebanon might perhaps be raised, with little more trouble, and much more profit and ornament.

26. The pines, which differ from the firs in the length and disposition of their leaves and hardness of the wood, do not, in Pliny's[36] account, yield so much resin as the fir-trees. Several species of both are accurately described and delineated by the naturalists. But they all agree so far as to seem related. Theophrastus gives the preference to that resin which is got from the silver fir and pitch-tree (ἐλάτη and πίτυς) before that yielded by the pine, which yet he saith is in greater plenty. Pliny[37], on the

[34] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XVI. c. 16—19.

[35] Cf. Sect. 28. Berkeley lays great stress, for medicinal purposes, on the quality of the tar. 'As there is as great difference in tar as in any commodity whatsoever,' says the author of *The Medical Virtues of Tar Water* (1744), 'the persons who intend to make it are cautioned as to the following particulars, lest Plantation tar, or tar used before, should be imposed upon them. The true properties of the right tar-water are that there should be an acid in the taste, the water when made should be as transparent as sherry, and the smell quite even, and no way offensive to any but those who have an antipathy to the smell of tar in general. Whereas the other has none of the acid, *which is the principal advantageous property*.' North American, but especially Norwegian, tar, is that recommended by Berkeley. The tar of the Thuringian forest was also in estimation.

[36] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XVI. c. 16—18. See also Hardouin's notes on Pliny.

[37] *Ibid.*

contrary, affirms that the pine produceth the smallest quantity. It should seem therefore that the interpreter of Theophrastus might have been mistaken, in rendering πεύκη by *pinus*; as well as Jonstonus, who likewise takes the pine for the πεύκη of Theophrastus. Hardouin will have the pinus of Pliny to have been by others called πεύκη, but by Theophrastus πίτυς. Ray thinks the common fir, or *picea* of the Latins, to be the male fir of Theophrastus. This was probably the spruce fir; for the *picea*, according to Pliny[38], yields much resin, loves a cold and mountainous situation, and is distinguished, *tonsili facilitate*, by its fitness to be shorn, which agrees with the spruce-fir, whereof I have seen close-shorn hedges.

27. There seems to have been some confusion in the naming of these trees, as well among the ancients as the moderns. The ancient Greek and Latin names are by later authors applied very differently. Pliny[39] himself acknowledgeth it is not easy even for the skilful to distinguish the trees by their leaves, and know their sexes and kinds; and that difficulty is since much increased, by the discovery of many new species of that evergreen tribe, growing in various parts of the globe. But descriptions are not so easily misapplied as names. Theophrastus tells that πίτυς differeth from πεύκη among other things, in that it is neither so tall nor so straight, nor hath so large a leaf. The fir he distinguisheth into male and female: the latter is softer timber than the male; it is also a taller and fairer tree, and this is probably the silver fir.

28. To say no more on this obscure business, which I leave to the critics, I shall observe that according to Theophrastus not only the turpentine-trees, the pines, and the firs yield resin or tar, but also the cedars and palm-trees; and the words *pix* and *resina* are taken by Pliny in so large a sense as to include the weepings of the lentiscus and cypress, and the balms of Arabia and Judea; all which perhaps are near of kin, and in their most useful qualities concur with common tar, especially the Norwegian, which is the most liquid, and best for medicinal uses of any that I have experienced. Those trees that grow on mountains, exposed to the sun or the north wind[40], are reckoned by Theo-

[38] *Hist. Nat.* lib. XVI. c. 18. See Hardouin's notes on Pliny.
[39] *Ibid.* c. 19. [40] Cf. sect. 25.

phrastus to produce the best and purest tar; and the Idæan pines were distinguished from those growing on the plain, as yielding a thinner, sweeter, and better scented tar, all which differences I think I have observed, between the tar that comes from Norway, and that which comes from low and swampy countries.

29. [41] Agreeable to the old observation of the Peripatetics, that heat gathereth homogeneous things, and disperseth such as are heterogeneous, we find Chemistry is fitted for the analysis of bodies. But the chemistry of nature is much more perfect than that of human art, inasmuch as it joineth to the power of heat that of the most exquisite mechanism. Those who have examined the structure of trees and plants by microscopes have discovered an admirable variety of fine capillary tubes and vessels, fitted for several purposes, as the imbibing or attracting of proper nourishment, the distributing thereof through all parts of the vegetable, the discharge of superfluities, the secretion of particular juices. They are found to have ducts answering to the tracheæ in animals, for the conveying of air; they have others answering to lacteals, arteries, and veins. They feed, digest, respire, perspire, and generate their kind, and are provided with organs nicely fitted for all those uses.

30. The sap vessels are observed to be fine tubes running up through the trunk from the root. Secretory vessels are found in the bark, buds, leaves, and flowers. Exhaling vessels, for carrying off excrementitious parts, are discovered throughout the whole surface of the vegetable. And (though this point be not so well agreed) Dr. Grew, in his *Anatomy of Plants* [42], thinks there appears a circulation of the sap, moving downwards in the root, and feeding the trunk upwards.

31. Some difference indeed there is between learned men,

[41] In sect. 29—38 Berkeley speculates about the anatomy and physiology of vegetables, and their analogy to animal organization. They breathe, feed, digest, perspire, and generate; and pines and firs especially, under the action of the sun, secrete a balsam, which, perspiring through the bark, hardens into resin. It is this secretion, so abundant and tenacious of the *acid spirit* or *vegetable soul* in pines and firs, which is, according to Berkeley, through a natural chemistry, transformed into his catholic medicine.

[42] *The Anatomy of Plants: with an Idea of the philosophical History of Plants*, by Nehemiah Grew, M.D., London 1682. See bk. I. ch. 2. § 30. Dr. Grew (1628—1712), was secretary to the Royal Society, and the most eminent English botanist of his day, author of works on the anatomy and physiology of plants, which laid the foundation of Vegetable Physiology. The microscope was then initiating important discoveries. Grew, Ray, and Malpighi, are the three great modern botanists before Linnæus.

concerning the proper use of certain parts of vegetables. But, whether the discoverers have rightly guessed at all their uses or no, thus much is certain—that there are innumerable fine and curious parts in a vegetable body, and a wonderful similitude or analogy between the mechanism of plants and animals. And perhaps some will think it not unreasonable to suppose the mechanism of plants more curious than even that of animals, if we consider not only the several juices secreted by different parts of the same plant, but also the endless variety of juices drawn and formed out of the same soil, by various species of vegetables; which must therefore differ in an endless variety, as to the texture of their absorbent vessels and secretory ducts.

32. A body, therefore, either animal or vegetable, may be considered as an organized system of tubes and vessels, containing several sorts of fluids. And—as fluids are moved through the vessels of animal bodies by the systole and diastole of the heart, the alternate expansion and condensation of the air, and the oscillations in the membranes and tunics of the vessels—even so, by means of air expanded and contracted in the tracheæ or vessels made up of elastic fibres, the sap is propelled through the arterial tubes of a plant, and the vegetable juices, as they are rarefied by heat or condensed by cold, will either ascend and evaporate into air, or descend in the form of a gross liquor.

33. Juices, therefore, first purified by straining through the fine pores of the root, are afterwards exalted by the action of the air and the vessels of the plant; but, above all, by the action of the sun's light; which, at the same time that it heats, doth wonderfully rarefy and raise the sap, till it perspires and forms an atmosphere, like the effluvia of animal bodies. And, though the leaves are supposed to perform principally the office of lungs, breathing out excrementitious vapours, and drawing in alimentary; yet it seems probable, that the reciprocal actions of repulsion and attraction are performed all over the surface of vegetables as well as animals. In which reciprocation Hippocrates[43] supposeth the manner of nature's acting for the nourishment and health of animal bodies chiefly to consist. And, indeed, what share of a

[43] *Opera*, tom. I. pp. 629, &c. (ed. Lips. 1825)—in the treatise *De Diæta*.

plant's nourishment is drawn, through the leaves and bark, from that ambient heterogeneous fluid called air, is not easy to say. It seems very considerable, and altogether necessary, as well to vegetable as animal life.

34. It is an opinion received by many, that the sap circulates in plants as the blood in animals; that it ascends through capillary arteries in the trunk, into which are inosculated other vessels of the bark answering to veins, which bring back to the root the remainder of the sap, over and above what had been deposited during its ascent by the arterial vessels, and secreted for the several uses of the vegetable throughout all its parts, stem, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit. Others deny this circulation, and affirm that the sap doth not return through the bark vessels. It is nevertheless agreed by all that there are ascending and descending juices; while some will have the ascent and descent to be a circulation of the same juices through different vessels; others will have the ascending juice to be one sort attracted by the root, and the descending another imbibed by the leaves, or extremities of the branches; lastly, others think that the same juice, as it is rarefied or condensed by heat or cold, rises and subsides in the same tube. I shall not take upon me to decide this controversy. Only I cannot help observing that the vulgar argument from analogy between plants and animals loses much of its force, if it be considered that the supposed circulating of the sap, from the root or lacteals through the arteries, and thence returning, by inosculations, through the veins or bark vessels to the root or lacteals again, is in no sort conformable or analogous to the circulation of the blood.

35. It is sufficient to observe, what all must acknowledge, that a plant or tree is a very nice and complicated machine (sect. 30, 31); by the several parts and motions whereof, the crude juices, admitted through the absorbent vessels, whether of the root, trunk, or branches, are variously mixed, separated, altered, digested, and exalted, in a very wonderful manner. The juice, as it passeth in and out, up and down, through tubes of different textures, shapes, and sizes, and is affected by the alternate compression and expansion of elastic vessels, by the vicissitudes of seasons, the changes of weather, and the various action of the solar light, grows still more and more elaborate.

36. There is therefore no chemistry like that of nature, which addeth to the force of fire the most delicate, various, and artificial percolation (sect. 29). The incessant action of the sun upon the elements of air, earth, and water, and on all sorts of mixed bodies, animal, vegetable, and fossil, is supposed to perform all sorts of chemical operations. Whence it should follow, that the air contains all sorts of chemic productions, the vapours, fumes, oils, salts, and spirits of all the bodies we know: from which general aggregate or mass, those that are proper being drawn in, through the fine vessels of the leaves, branches, and stem of the tree, undergo, in its various organs, new alterations, secretions, and digestions, till such time as they assume the most elaborate form.

37. Nor is it to be wondered that the peculiar texture of each plant or tree, co-operating with the solar fire[44] and pre-existing juices, should so alter the fine nourishment drawn from earth and air (sect. 33), as to produce various specific qualities of great efficacy in medicine; especially if it be considered that in the opinion of learned men, there is an influence on plants derived from the sun, besides its mere heat. Certainly, Dr. Grew, that curious anatomist of plants, holds the solar influence[44] to differ from that of a mere culinary fire no otherwise than by being only a more temperate and equal heat.

38. The alimentary juice taken into the lacteals, [[45]if I may so say, of vegetables,] consists of oily, aqueous, and saline particles, which being dissolved, volatilized, and diversely agitated, part thereof is spent and exhaled into the air; and that part which remains is, by the economy of the plant, and action of the sun, strained, purified, concocted, and ripened, into an inspissated oil or balsam, and deposited in certain cells placed chiefly in the bark, which is thought to answer the *panniculus adiposus* in animals, defending trees from the weather, and, when in sufficient quantity, rendering them evergreen. This balsam, weeping or sweating through the bark, hardens into resin; and this most copiously in the several species of pines and firs, whose oil being in

[44] Cf. Berkeley's *First Letter to Thomas Prior, on the Virtues of Tar-water*, sect. 16, 17, where he professes 'the ancient opinion—that Fire is the animal spirit of the visible world.' See Grew's *Idea of a Philosophical History of Plants*, § 61.

[45] 'whether of animals or vegetables'—in first edition.

greater quantity, and more tenacious of the acid spirit, or vegetable soul (as perhaps it may not improperly be called), abides the action of the sun, and, attracting the sunbeams, is thereby exalted and enriched, so as to become a most noble medicine: such is the last product of a tree, perfectly maturated by time and sun.

39. It is remarked by Theophrastus that all plants and trees while they put forth have most humour, but when they have ceased to germinate and bear, then the humour is strongest, and most sheweth the nature of the plant, and that, therefore, trees yielding resin should be cut after germination. It seems also very reasonable to suppose the juice of old trees, whose organs bring no new sap, should be better ripened than that of others.

40. [46]The aromatic flavours of vegetables seem to depend upon the sun's light as much as colours. As in the production of the latter, the reflecting powers of the object, so in that of the former, the attractive and organical powers of the plant co-operate with the sun (sect. 36, 37). And as from Sir Isaac Newton's experiments it appears that all colours are virtually in the white light of the sun, and shew themselves when the rays are separated by the attracting and repelling powers of objects—even so the specific qualities of the elaborate juices of plants seem to be virtually or eminently contained in the solar light, and are actually exhibited upon the separation of the rays, by the peculiar powers of the capillary organs in vegetables, attracting and imbibing certain rays, which produce certain flavours and qualities, in like manner as certain rays, being reflected, produce certain colours.

41. It hath been observed by some curious anatomists that the secretory vessels in the glands of animal bodies are lined with a fine down, which in different glands is of different colours. And it is thought that each particular down, being originally imbued with its own proper juice, attracts none but that sort; by which means so many various juices are secreted in different parts of the body. And perhaps there may be something analogous to this in the fine absorbent vessels of plants, which may co-operate towards

[46] Sect. 40—46 expressly refer to the already noted qualities of the juice of plants, especially pines and firs. The solar light or emanation in this, according to the 'fire philosophy' of *Siris*, constitutes the soul of vegetable life, and is to the macrocosm what the animal spirit is to the microcosm. The sanitary properties of light are now universally recognised, alike in the case of animals and vegetables.

producing that endless variety of juices, elaborated in plants from the same earth and air.

42. The balsam or essential oil of vegetables contains a spirit, wherein consist the specific qualities, the smell and taste, of the plant. Boerhaave[47] holds the native presiding spirit to be neither oil, salt, earth, or water; but somewhat too fine and subtle to be caught alone and rendered visible to the eye. This when suffered to fly off, for instance, from the oil of rosemary, leaves it destitute of all flavour. This spark of life, this spirit or soul, if we may so say, of the vegetable departs without any sensible diminution of the oil or water wherein it was lodged.

43. It should seem that the forms, souls, or principles of vegetable life subsist in the light or solar emanation (sect. 40); which in respect of the macrocosm is what the animal spirit is to the microcosm — the interior tegument, the subtle instrument and vehicle of power. No wonder, then, that the *ens primum* or *scintilla spirituosa*, as it is called, of plants should be a thing so fine and fugacious as to escape our nicest search. It is evident that nature at the sun's approach vegetates, and languishes at his recess; this terrestrial globe seeming only a matrix disposed and prepared to receive life from his light; whence Homer in his Hymns styleth earth the wife of heaven, ἄλοχ' οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.

44. The luminous spirit which is the form or life of a plant, from whence its differences and properties flow, is somewhat extremely volatile. It is not the oil, but a thing more subtle, whereof oil is the vehicle, which retains it from flying off, and is lodged in several parts of the plant, particularly in the cells of the bark and in the seeds. This oil, purified and exalted by the organical powers of the plant, and agitated by warmth, becomes a proper receptacle of the spirit: part of which spirit exhales through the leaves and flowers, and part is arrested by this unctuous humour that detains it in the plant. It is to be noted this essential oil, animated, as one may say, with the flavour of the plant, is very different from any spirit that can be procured from the same plant by fermentation.

45. Light impregnates air (sect. 37, 43), air impregnates vapour;

[47] Böerhaave (1668—1738)—the most illustrious physician of the 18th century. See his *Elementa Chemiæ*, tom. II. pp. 149—50.

and this becomes a watery juice by distillation, having risen first in the cold still with a kindly gentle heat. This fragrant vegetable water is possessed of the specific odour and taste of the plant. It is remarked that distilled oils added to water for counterfeiting the vegetable water can never equal it, artificial chemistry falling short of the natural.

46. The less violence is used to nature the better its produce. The juice of olives or grapes issuing by the lightest pressure is best. Resins that drop from the branches spontaneously, or ooze upon the slightest incision, are the finest and most fragrant. And infusions are observed to act more strongly than decoctions of plants; the more subtle and volatile salts and spirits, which might be lost or corrupted by the latter, being obtained in their natural state by the former. It is also observed that the finest, purest, and most volatile part is that which first ascends in distillation. And, indeed, it should seem the lightest and most active particles required least force to disengage them from the subject.

47. The salts, therefore, and more active spirits of the tar are got by infusion in cold water; but the resinous part is not to be dissolved thereby (sect. 7). Hence the prejudice which some perhaps may entertain against tar-water as a medicine, the use whereof might inflame the blood by its sulphur and resin, appears to be not well grounded; it being indeed impregnated with a fine acid spirit, balsamic, cooling, diuretic, and possessed of many other virtues (sect. 42, 44). Spirits are supposed to consist of salts and phlegm, probably, too, somewhat of a fine oily nature, differing from oil in that it mixeth with water, and agreeing with oil in that it runneth in rivulets by distillation. Thus much is allowed, that the water, earth, and fixed salt are the same in all plants; that, therefore, which differenceth a plant, or makes it what it is—the native spark or form, in the language of the chemists or schools—is none of those things, nor yet the finest oil, which seemeth only its receptacle or vehicle. It is observed by chemists that all sorts of balsamic wood afford an acid spirit, which is the volatile oily salt of the vegetable; herein are chiefly contained their medicinal virtues; and, by the trials I have made, it appears that the acid spirit in tar-water possesseth the virtues, in an eminent degree, of that of *guaiacum*, and other medicinal woods.

48. Qualities in a degree too strong for human nature to subdue, and assimilate to itself must hurt the constitution. All acids, therefore, may not be useful or innocent. But this seemeth an acid so thoroughly concocted, so gentle, bland, and temperate, and withal a spirit so fine and volatile, as readily to enter the smallest vessels, and be assimilated with the utmost ease.

49. If any one were minded to dissolve some of the resin, together with the salt or spirit, he need only mix some spirit of wine with the water. But such an entire solution of resins and gums as to qualify them for entering and pervading the animal system, like the fine acid spirit that first flies off from the subject, is perhaps impossible to obtain. It is an apothegm of the chemists, derived from Helmont[48], that whoever can make myrrh soluble by the human body has the secret of prolonging his days: and Boerhaave[49] owns that there seems to be truth in this, from its resisting putrefaction. Now, this quality is as remarkable in tar, with which the ancients embalmed and preserved dead bodies. And though Boerhaave himself, and other chemists before him, have given methods for making solutions of myrrh, yet it is by means of alcohol which extracts only the inflammable parts. And it doth not seem that any solution of myrrh is impregnated with its salt or acid spirit. It may not, therefore, seem strange if this water should be found more beneficial for procuring health and long life than any solution of myrrh whatsoever.

50. Certainly divers resins and gums may have virtues, and yet not be able for their grossness to pass the lacteals and other finer vessels, nor yet, perhaps, readily impart those virtues to a menstruum that may with safety and speed convey them throughout the human body. Upon all which accounts, I believe tar-water will be found to have singular advantages. It is observed that acid spirits prove the stronger, by how much the greater degree of heat is required to raise them. And indeed there seemeth to be no acid more gentle than this—obtained by the simple affusion of cold water; which carries off from the subject the most light and

[48] J. B. Van Helmont (1572—1644), probably the greatest chemist before Lavoisier. He strove to carry out the notions of Paracelsus, by whose writings he was attracted to chemistry and alchemy. The seat of the soul he placed in the stomach, offering as one reason that when we hear bad news we lose appetite for food. His works were edited by his son, F. M. Van Helmont.

[49] *Elementa Chemiæ*, tom. II. p. 231.

subtle parts, and, if one may so speak, the very flower of its specific qualities. And here it is to be noted that the volatile salt and spirit of vegetables do, by gently stimulating the solids, attenuate the fluids contained in them, and promote secretions, and that they are penetrating and active, contrary to the general nature of other acids.

51. It is a great maxim for health, that the juices of the body be kept fluid in a due proportion. Therefore, the acid volatile spirit in tar-water, at once attenuating and cooling in a moderate degree, must greatly conduce to health, as a mild salutary deobstruent, quickening the circulation of the fluids without wounding the solids, thereby gently removing or preventing those obstructions which are the great and general cause of most chronical diseases; in this manner answering to the antihysterics, *assafœtida*, *galbanum*, myrrh, amber, and, in general, to all the resins and gums of trees or shrubs useful in nervous cases.

52. Warm water is itself a deobstruent. Therefore the infusion of tar drunk warm is easier insinuated into all the nice capillary vessels, and acts not only by virtue of the balsam, but also by that of the vehicle. Its taste, its diuretic quality, its being so great a cordial, shew the activity of this medicine. And, at the same time that it quickens the sluggish blood of the hysterical, its balsamic oily nature abates the too rapid motion of the sharp thin blood in those who are hectic. There is a lentor and smoothness in the blood of healthy strong people; on the contrary, there is often an acrimony and solution in that of weakly morbid persons. The fine particles of tar are not only warm and active, they are also balsamic and emollient; softening and enriching the sharp and vapid blood, and healing the erosions occasioned thereby in the blood-vessels and glands.

53. Tar-water possesseth the stomachic and cardiac qualities of *elixir proprietatis*, Stoughton's drops, and many such tinctures and extracts; with this difference, that it worketh its effect more safely, as it hath nothing of that spirit of wine, which, however mixed and disguised, may yet be well accounted a poison in some degree.

54. Such medicines are supposed to be diaphoretic, which, being of an active and subtle nature, pass through the whole system, and work their effect in the finest capillaries and perspiratory

ducts, which they gently cleanse and open. Tar-water is extremely well fitted to work by such an insensible diaphoresis, by the fineness and activity of its acid volatile spirit. And surely those parts ought to be very fine, which can scour the perspiratory ducts, under the scarf skin or cuticle, if it be true, that one grain of sand would cover the mouths of more than a hundred thousand.

55. Another way wherein tar-water operates is by urine, than which perhaps none is more safe and effectual, for cleansing the blood and carrying off its salts. But it seems to produce its principal effect as an alterative, sure and easy, much safer than those vehement, purgative, emetic, and salivating medicines, which do violence to nature.

56. An obstruction of some vessels causeth the blood to move more swiftly in other vessels which are not obstructed. Hence manifold disorders. A liquor that dilutes and attenuates resolves the concretions which obstruct. Tar-water is such a liquor. It may be said, indeed, of common water, that it attenuates; also of mercurial preparations, that they attenuate. But it should be considered that mere water only distends the vessels, and thereby weakens their tone; and that mercury by its great momentum may justly be suspected of hurting the fine capillaries, which two deobstruents therefore might easily overact their parts, and (by lessening the force of the elastic vessels) remotely produce those concretions they are intended to remove.

57. Weak and rigid fibres are looked on by the most able physicians, as sources of two different classes of distempers: a sluggish motion of the liquids occasioning weak fibres: therefore tar-water is good to strengthen them, as it gently accelerates their contents. On the other hand, being an unctuous, bland fluid, it moistens and softens the dry and stiff fibres, and so proves a remedy for both extremes.

58. Common soaps are compositions of lixivial salt and oil. The corrosive acrimony of the saline particles, being softened by the mixture of an unctuous substance, they insinuate themselves into the small ducts with less difficulty and danger. The combination of these different substances makes up a very subtle and active medicine, fitted for mixing with all humours, and resolving all obstructions. Soap, therefore, is justly esteemed a most efficacious medicine in many distempers. Alkaline soap is

allowed to be cleansing, attenuating, opening, resolving, sweetening; it is pectoral, vulnerary, diuretic, and hath other good qualities which are also to be found in tar-water. It is granted that oil and acid salts combined together exist in vegetables, and that consequently there are acid soaps as well as alkaline. And the saponaceous nature of the acid vegetable spirits is what renders them so diuretic, sudorific, penetrating, abstersive, and resolving. Such, for instance, is the acid spirit of *guaiacum*. And all these same virtues seem to be in tar-water in a mild and salutary degree.

59. It is the general opinion that all acids coagulate the blood. Boerhaave[50] excepts vinegar, which he holds to be a soap, inasmuch as it is found to contain an oil as well as an acid spirit. Hence it is both unctuous and penetrating, a powerful antiphlogistic, and preservative against corruption and infection. Now it seems evident that tar-water is a soap as well as vinegar. For, though it be a character of resin, which is an inspissated gross oil, not to dissolve in water (sect. 47), yet the salts attract some fine particles of essential oil: which fine oil serves as a vehicle for the acid salts, and shews itself in the colour of the tar-water: for all pure salts are colourless. And, though the resin will not dissolve in water, yet the subtle oil, in which the vegetable salts are lodged, may as well mix with water as vinegar doth, which contains both oil and salt. And, as the oil in tar-water discovers itself to the eye, so the acid salts do manifest themselves to the taste. Tar-water therefore is a soap, and as such hath the medicinal qualities of soap.

60. It operates more gently as the acid salts lose their acrimony, being sheathed in oil[51], and thereby approaching the nature of neutral salts, are more benign and friendly to the animal system: and more effectually, as, by the help of a volatile, smooth, insinuating oil, those same salts are more easily introduced into the capillary ducts. Therefore, in fevers and epidemical distempers it is (and I have found it so), as well as in chronical diseases, a most safe and efficacious medicine, being good against too great fluidity as a balsamic, and good against viscidity as a

[50] *Elementa Chemiæ*, tom. II. p. 216.

[51] Cf. Berkeley's *Letter to Thomas Prior, on the Virtues of Tar-water in the Plague* (vol III. p. 484)—especially the reference to Mr. Reid's *Letter to Dr. Hales*. Reid recommends that the medicinal acid should be freed from its oil.

soap. There is something in the fiery corrosive nature of lixivial salts, which makes alkaline soap a dangerous remedy in all cases where an inflammation is apprehended. And, as inflammations are often occasioned by obstructions, it should seem an acid soap was much the safer deobstruent.

61. Even the best turpentines, however famous for their vulnerary and detergent qualities, have yet been observed by their warmth to dispose to inflammatory tumours. But the acid spirit (sect. 7, 8) being in so great proportion in tar-water, renders it a cooler and safer medicine. And the æthereal oil of turpentine, though an admirable dryer, healer, and anodyne, when outwardly applied to wounds and ulcers, and not less useful in cleansing the urinary passages and healing their ulcerations, yet is known to be of a nature so very relaxing as sometimes to do much mischief when taken inwardly. Tar-water is not attended with the same ill effects, which I believe are owing in a great measure to the æthereal oils being deprived of the acid spirit in distillation, which, vellicating and contracting as a stimulus, might have proved a counterpoise to the excessive lubricating and relaxing qualities of the oil.

62. Woods in decoction do not seem to yield so ripe and elaborate a juice, as that which is deposited in the cells or *loculi terebinthiaci*, and spontaneously oozes from them. And indeed, though the balsam of Peru, obtained by boiling wood and scumming the decoction, be a very valuable medicine, and of great account in divers cases, particularly asthmas, nephritic pains, nervous colics, and obstructions, yet I do verily think (and I do not say this without experience) that tar-water is a more efficacious remedy in all those cases than even that costly drug.

63. It hath been already observed that the restorative pectoral antihysterical virtues of the most precious balsams and gums are possessed in a high degree by tar-water (sect. 9, 21, 22, 23). And I do not know any purpose answered by the wood drinks for which tar-water may not be used with at least equal success. It contains the virtues even of *guaiacum*, which seems the most efficacious of all woods, warming and sweetening the humours, diaphoretic and useful in gouts, dropsies, and rheums, as well as in the foul disease. Nor should it seem strange if the virtues obtained by boiling an old dry wood prove inferior to those extracted from a balsam.

64. There is a fine volatile spirit in the waters of Geronster, the most esteemed of all the fountains about the Spa[52], but whose waters do not bear transporting. The stomachic, cardiac, and diuretic qualities of this fountain somewhat resemble those of tar-water, which, if I am not greatly mistaken, contains the virtues of the best chalybeat and sulphureous waters; with this difference, that those waters are apt to affect the head in taking, which tar-water is not. Besides, there is a regimen of diet to be observed, especially with chalybeat waters, which I never found necessary with this. Tar-water layeth under no restraint either as to diet, hours, or employment. A man may study, or exercise, or repose, keep his own hours, pass his time either within or without, and take wholesome nourishment of any kind.

65. The use of mineral waters, however excellent for the nerves and stomach, is often suspended by colds and inflammatory disorders; in which they are acknowledged to be very dangerous: whereas tar-water is so far from hurting in those cases, or being discontinued on that account, that it greatly contributes to their cure (sect. 7).

66. Cordials, vulgarly so called, act immediately on the stomach, and by consent of nerves on the head. But medicines of an operation too fine and light to produce a sensible effect in the *primæ viæ* may, nevertheless, in their passage through the capillaries, operate on the sides of those small vessels, in such manner as to quicken their oscillations, and consequently the motion of their contents, producing, in issue and effect, all the benefits of a cordial much more lasting and salutary than those of [[53]distilled] spirits, which by their caustic and coagulating qualities do incomparably more mischief than good. Such a cardiac medicine is tar-water. The transient fits of mirth, produced from fermented liquors, [[54]and distilled spirits,] are attended with proportionable depression of spirit in their intervals. But the calm cheerfulness arising from this *water of health* (as it may be justly called) is permanent. In which it emulates the virtues of that famous plant Gen Seng[55], so much valued in China as the only cordial

[52] The waters of Spa have been longer in repute than almost any others in Europe. Only one of the springs is in Spa itself; the others are at some distance in the woods.

[53] 'Fermented' in first edition.

[54] Not in the early editions.

[55] Gen (Gin) Seng is the root of an Asiatic plant (*Panax Schin-Seng*). It has

that raises the spirits without depressing them. Tar-water is so far from hurting the nerves, as common cordials do, that it is highly useful in cramps, spasms of the viscera, and paralytic numbness.

67. Emetics are on certain occasions administered with great success. But the overstraining and weakening of nature may be very justly apprehended from a course of emetics. They are nevertheless prescribed and substituted for exercise. But it is well remarked in Plato's *Timæus*[56] that vomits and purges are the worst exercise in the world. There is something in the mild operation of tar-water, that seems more friendly to the economy, and forwards the digestions and secretions in a way more natural and benign; the mildness of this medicine being such that I have known children take it, for above six months together, with great benefit, and without any inconvenience: and, after long and repeated experience, I do esteem it a most excellent diet-drink, fitted to all seasons and ages.

68. It is I think allowed that the origin of the gout lies in a faulty digestion. And it is remarked by the ablest physicians, that the gout is so difficult to cure, because heating medicines aggravate its immediate, and cooling its remote cause. But tar-water, although it contains active principles that strengthen the digestion beyond anything I know, and consequently must be highly useful, either to prevent or lessen the following fit, or by invigorating the blood to cast it upon the extremities, yet it is not of so heating a nature as to do harm even in the fit. Nothing is more difficult or disagreeable than to argue men out of their prejudices; I shall not therefore enter into controversies on this subject, but, if men dispute and object, shall leave the decision to time and trial.

69. In the modern practice, soap, opium, and mercury, bid fairest for Universal Medicines.—The first of these is highly spoken of. But then, those who magnify it most except against the use of it in such cases where the obstruction is attended with

long been famous among the Chinese as a stimulant and restorative, especially in diseases resulting from weakness of body. The most eminent physicians in China have written volumes on its medicinal virtues, in a great variety of diseases. Don, the botanist, says that the roots, which resemble the human form, are gathered and dried, and enter into almost every medicine used by the Tartars and Chinese.

[56] P. 89.

a putrefactive alkali, or where an inflammatory disposition appears. It is acknowledged to be very dangerous in a phthisis, fever, and some other cases in which tar-water is not only safe but useful.

70. Opium, though a medicine of great extent and efficacy, yet is frequently known to produce grievous disorders in hysterical or hypochondriacal persons, who make a great part, perhaps the greatest, of those who lead sedentary lives in these islands. Besides, upon all constitutions dangerous errors may be committed in the use of opium.

71. Mercury[57] hath of late years become a medicine of very general use—the extreme minuteness, mobility, and momentum of its parts rendering it a most powerful cleanser of all obstructions, even in the most minute capillaries. But then we should be cautious in the use of it, if we consider that the very thing which gives it power of doing good above other deobstruents doth also dispose it to do mischief. I mean its great momentum, the weight of it being about ten times that of blood, and the momentum being the joint product of the weight and velocity, it must needs operate with great force; and may it not be justly feared that so great a force, entering the minutest vessels, and breaking the obstructed matter, might also break or wound the fine tender coats of those small vessels, and so bring on the untimely effects of old age, producing more, perhaps, and worse obstructions than those it removed? Similar consequences may justly be apprehended from other mineral and ponderous medicines. Therefore, upon the whole, there will not perhaps be found any medicine more general in its use, or more salutary in its effects, than tar-water.

72. To suppose that all distempers, arising from very different, and it may be from contrary causes, can be cured by one and the same medicine[58] must seem chimerical. But it may with truth be affirmed, that the virtue of tar-water extends to a surprising variety of cases very distant and unlike (sect. 3, 4, 5, 6, 21, &c.). This I have experienced in my neighbours, my family, and myself.

[57] Mercury was much in vogue with the Arabian alchemists. Cf. sect. 194.

[58] Cf. the definition of a Panacea, in Berkeley's *First Letter to Thomas Prior*, sect. 12. It was Berkeley's suggestion that tar-water may be a Universal Medicine that chiefly excited the faculty against *Siris*.

And, as I live in a remote corner, among poor neighbours, who for want of a regular physician have often recourse to me, I have had frequent opportunities of trial, which convince me it is of so just a temperament as to be an enemy to all extremes. I have known it to do great good in a cold, watery constitution, as a cardiac and stomachic: and at the same time allay heat and feverish thirst in another. I have known it correct costive habits in some, and the contrary habit in others. Nor will this seem incredible if it be considered that middle qualities naturally reduce the extreme. Warm water, for instance, mixed with hot and cold, will lessen the heat in that, and the cold in this.

73. They who know the great virtues of common soap, whose coarse lixivial salts are the product of culinary fire, will not think it incredible that virtues of mighty force and extent should be found in a fine acid soap (sect. 58), the salts and oil whereof are a most elaborate product of nature and the solar light.

74. It is certain tar-water warms, and therefore some may perhaps still think it cannot cool. The more effectually to remove this prejudice, let it be farther considered that as, on the one hand, opposite causes do sometimes produce the same effect, for instance, heat by rarefaction and cold by condensation do both increase the air's elasticity; so, on the other hand, the same cause shall sometimes produce opposite effects: heat for instance [[59]thins, and again heat coagulates] the blood. It is not therefore strange, that tar-water should warm one habit and cool another, have one good effect on a cold constitution, and another good effect on an inflamed one; nor, if this be so, that it should cure opposite disorders. All which justifies to reason what I have often found true in fact. The salts, the spirits, the heat of tar-water are of a temperature congenial to the constitution of a man, which receives from it a kindly warmth, but no inflaming heat. It was remarkable that two children in my neighbourhood, being in a course of tar-water, upon an intermission of it, never failed to have their issues inflamed by a humour much more hot and sharp than at other times. But its great use in the small-pox, pleurisies, and fevers is a sufficient proof that tar-water is not of an inflaming nature.

75. I have dwelt the longer on this head, because some gentle-

[59] 'In one degree thins, and in another coagulates'—in first edition.

men of the faculty have thought fit to declare that tar-water must inflame[60], and that they would never visit any patient in a fever who had been a drinker of it. But I will venture to affirm, that it is so far from increasing a feverish inflammation, that it is on the contrary a most ready means to allay and extinguish it. It is of admirable use in fevers, being at the same time the surest, safest and most effectual, both paregoric and cordial: for the truth of which I appeal to any person's experience who shall take a large draught of it milk warm in the paroxysm of a fever, even when plain water or herb-teas shall be found to have little or no effect. To me it seems that its singular and surprising use in fevers of all kinds, were there nothing else, would be alone sufficient to recommend it to the public.

76. The best physicians make the idea of a fever to consist in a too great velocity of the heart's motion, and too great resistance at the capillaries[61]. Tar-water, as it softens and gently stimulates those nice vessels, helps to propel their contents, and so contributes to remove the latter part of the disorder. And for the former, the irritating acrimony which accelerates the motion of the heart is diluted by watery, corrected by acid, and softened by balsamic remedies, all which intentions are answered by this aqueous, acid, balsamic medicine. Besides, the viscid juices coagulated by the febrile heat are resolved by tar-water as a soap, and not too far resolved, as it is a gentle acid soap; to which we may add, that the peccant humours and salts are carried off by its diaphoretic and diuretic qualities.

77. I found all this confirmed by my own experience in the late sickly season of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-one[62], having had twenty-five fevers in my own family cured by this medicinal water, drunk copiously. The same method was practised on several of my poor neighbours with equal success. It suddenly calmed the feverish anxieties, and seemed every glass to refresh, and infuse life and spirit into the patient. At first some of these patients had been vomited, but afterwards I found that without vomiting, bleeding, blistering, or any other evacuation or medicine whatever, very bad fevers could be cured by the sole drinking of

[60] Cf. sect. 7.

[61] Hence the internal heat, with cold at the extremities, by which fevers are characterised.

[62] Cf. Berkeley's letters to Thomas Prior, in February and May, 1741.

tar-water, milk warm, and in good quantity, perhaps a large glass every hour [[63]or oftener] taken in bed. And it was remarkable that such as were cured by this comfortable cordial recovered health and spirits at once, while those who had been cured by evacuations often languished long, even after the fever had left them, before they could recover of their medicines and regain their strength.

78. In peripneumonies and pleurisies I have observed tar-water to be excellent, having known some pleuritic persons cured without bleeding, by a blister early applied to the stitch, and the copious drinking of tar-water, four or five quarts, or even more in four-and-twenty hours. And I do recommend it to farther trial, whether in all cases of a pleurisy, one moderate bleeding, a blister on the spot, and plenty of tepid tar-water may not suffice, without those repeated and immoderate bleedings, the bad effects of which are perhaps never got over. I do even suspect that a pleuritic patient betaking himself to bed betimes, and drinking very copiously of tar-water, may be cured by that alone, without bleeding, blistering, or any other medicine whatsoever: certainly I have found this succeed at a glass every half hour.

79. I have known a bloody flux[64] of long continuance, after divers medicines had been tried in vain, cured by tar-water. But that which I take to be the most speedy and effectual remedy in a bloody flux is a clyster of an ounce of common brown resin dissolved over a fire in two ounces of oil, and added to a pint of broth, which not long since I had frequent occasion of trying when that distemper was epidemical. Nor can I say that any to whom I advised it miscarried. This experiment I was led to make by the opinion I had of tar as a balsamic: and resin is only tar inspissated.

80. Nothing that I know corroborates the stomach so much as tar-water (sect. 68). Whence it follows, that it must be of singular use to persons afflicted with the gout. And, from what I have observed in five or six instances, I do verily believe it the best and safest medicine either to prevent the gout, or so to strengthen nature against the fit, as to drive it from the vitals. Dr. Sydenham, in his Treatise of the Gout[65], declares that whoever

[63] Not in the early editions.
[64] Cf. letter to Prior, Feb. 8, 1741.
[65] *Tractatus de Podagra* (see sect. 29, 40) —by Sydenham (1624—1689), the friend of Locke and Boyle, and the greatest English physician of the seventeenth century. He was himself a martyr to gout.

finds a medicine the most efficacious for strengthening digestion will do more service in the cure of that and other chronical distempers, than he can even form a notion of. And I leave it to trial, whether tar-water be not that medicine, as I myself am persuaded it is, by all the experiments I could make. But in all trials I would recommend discretion; for instance, a man with the gout in his stomach ought not to drink cold tar-water. This Essay leaves room for future experiment in every part of it, not pretending to be a complete treatise.

81. It is evident to sense that blood, urine, and other animal juices, being let to stand, soon contract a great acrimony. Juices, therefore, from a bad digestion retained, and stagnating in the body, grow sharp and putrid. Hence a fermenting heat, the immediate cause of the gout. The curing this by cooling medicines, as they would increase the antecedent cause, must be a vain attempt. On the other hand, spices and spirituous liquors, while they contribute to remove the antecedent cause or bad digestion, would, by inflaming the blood, increase the proximate or immediate cause of the gout, to wit, the fermenting heat. The scope therefore must be, to find a medicine that shall corroborate but not inflame. Bitter herbs are recommended; but they are weak in comparison of tar-water.

82. The great force of tar-water to correct the acrimony of the blood appears in nothing more than in the cure of a gangrene from an internal cause; which was performed on a servant of my own, by prescribing the copious and constant use of tar-water for a few weeks.—From my representing tar-water as good for so many things, some perhaps may conclude it is good for nothing. But charity obligeth me to say what I know, and what I think, howsoever it may be taken. Men may censure and object as they please, but I appeal to time and experiment. Effects misimputed, cases wrong told, circumstances overlooked, perhaps, too, prejudices and partialities against truth may for a time prevail, and keep her at the bottom of her well, from whence nevertheless she emergeth sooner or later, and strikes the eyes of all those who do not keep them shut.

83. Boerhaave[66] thinks a specific may be found for that peculiar

[66] See his *Aphorismi de Cognoscendis et Curendis Morbis* (1708), aph. 1390, 1391; also his *Praxis Medica* (1728). 'De Variolis,' pp. 297–320. Cf. Berkeley's *Further Thoughts on Tar-water*, vol. III. p. 496.

venom which infects the blood in the small-pox, and that the prospect of so great a public benefit should stir up men to search for it. Its wonderful success in preventing and mitigating that distemper (sect. 2, 3) would incline one to suspect that tar-water is such a specific [[67]especially since I have found it of sovereign use as well during the small-pox as before it]. Some think an erysipelas and the plague differ only in degree. If so, tar-water should be useful in the plague, for I have known it cure an erysipelas.

84. Tar-water, as cleansing, healing, and balsamic, is good in all disorders of the urinary passages, whether obstructed or ulcerated. Dr. Lister[68] supposeth, indeed, that turpentines act by a caustic quality, which irritates the coats of the urinary ducts to expel sand or gravel. But it should seem this expelling diuretic virtue consisted rather in the salts than the resin, and consequently resides in the tar-water, gently stimulating by its salts, without the dangerous force of a caustic. The violent operation of ipecacuanha lies in its resin, but the saline extract is a gentle purge and diuretic, by the stimulus of its salts.

85. That which acts as a mild cordial (sect. 66), neither hurting the capillary vessels as a caustic, nor affecting the nerves, nor coagulating the juices, must in all cases be a friend to nature, and assist the *vis vitæ* in its struggle against all kinds of contagion. And from what I have observed, tar-water appears to me a useful preservative in all epidemical disorders, and against all other infection whatsoever, as well as that of the small-pox. What effects the *animi pathemata* have in human maladies is well known, and consequently the general benefit of such a cardiac [[69]may be reasonably supposed].

86. [70]As the body is said to clothe the soul, so the nerves may be said to constitute her inner garment[71]. And, as the soul

[67] Added in second edition.

[68] Dr. Martin Lister (1638—1712), a learned English physician, eminent naturalist, frequent contributor to the *Philos. Trans.*, and author of works in natural history and anatomy of repute in their day. His *Journey to Paris* (1698) was parodied by Dr. King in his *Journey to London*. Dr. Lister was a liberal benefactor to the Ashmolean Museum.

[69] 'Cannot be doubted'—in first edition.

[70] In sect. 86—119. we have a reasoned vindication of the utility of tar-water in the various forms of nervous disease, indigestion, and scurvy, with an eloquent appeal to its advantages to the studious.

[71] Yet elsewhere Berkeley speaks of the body, including the nerves, as contained in mind. The two modes of statement are of course easily reconcileable.

animates the whole, what nearly touches the soul relates to all. Therefore the asperity of tartarous salts, and the fiery acrimony of alkaline salts, irritating and wounding the nerves, produce nascent passions and anxieties in the soul; which both aggravate distempers, and render men's lives restless and wretched, even when they are afflicted with no apparent distemper. This is the latent spring of much woe, spleen, and *tædium vitæ*. Small imperceptible irritations of the minutest fibres or filaments, caused by the pungent salts of wines and sauces, do so shake and disturb the microcosms of high livers, as often to raise tempests in courts and senates. Whereas the gentle vibrations that are raised in the nerves, by a fine subtle acid, sheathed in a smooth volatile oil (sect. 59, 61), softly stimulating and bracing the nervous vessels and fibres, promote a due circulation and secretion of the animal juices, and create a calm satisfied sense of health. And, accordingly, I have often known tar-water procure sleep and compose the spirits in cruel vigils, occasioned either by sickness or by too intense application of mind.

87. In diseases sometimes accidents happen from without by mismanagement, sometimes latent causes operate within, jointly with the specific taint or peculiar cause of the malady. The causes of distempers are often complicated, and there may be something in the idiosyncrasy of the patient that puzzles the physician. It may therefore be presumed that no medicine is infallible, not even in any one disorder. But, as tar-water possesseth the virtues of fortifying the stomach, as well as purifying and invigorating the blood, beyond any medicine that I know, it may be presumed of great and general efficacy in all those numerous illnesses which take their rise from foul or vapid blood, or from a bad digestion. The animal spirits are elaborated from the blood. Such therefore as the blood is, such will be the animal spirits, more or less, weaker or stronger. This sheweth the usefulness of tar-water in all hysteric and hypochondriac cases: which, together with the maladies from indigestion, comprise almost the whole tribe of chronical diseases.

88. The *scurvy* may be reckoned in these climates a universal malady, as people in general are subject to it, and as it mixes more or less in almost all diseases. Whether this proceeds from want of elasticity in our air, upon which the tone of the vessels

depends, and upon that the several secretions; or whether it proceeds from the moisture of our climate, or the grossness of our food, or the salts in our atmosphere, or from all these together—thus much at least seems not absurd to suppose, that as physicians in Spain and Italy are apt to suspect the venereal taint to be a latent principle, and bear a part in every illness, so far, as good reason, the scurvy should be considered by our physicians as having some share in most disorders and constitutions that fall in their way. It is certain our perspiration is not so free as in clearer air and warmer climates. Perspirable humours not discharged will stagnate and putrefy. A diet of animal food will be apt to render the juices of our bodies alkalescent. Hence ichorous and corrosive humours and many disorders. Moist air makes viscid blood; and saline air inflames this viscid blood. Hence broken capillaries, extravasated blood, spots, and ulcers, and other scorbutic symptoms. The body of a man attracts and imbibes the moisture and salts of the air and whatever floats in the atmosphere, which as it is common to all, so it affects all more or less.

89. Doctor Musgrave[72] thinks the Devonshire scurvy a relic of the leprosy, and that it is not owing to the qualities of the air. But, as these insulars in general live in a gross saline air, and their vessels being less elastic are consequently less able to subdue and cast off what their bodies as sponges draw in, one would be tempted to suspect the air not a little concerned, especially in such a situation as that of Devonshire. In all these British islands we enjoy a great mediocrity of climate; the effect whereof is, that we have neither heat enough to exalt and dissipate the gross vapours, as in Italy, nor cold enough to condense and precipitate them, as in Sweden. So they are left floating in the air, which we constantly breathe, and imbibe through the whole surface of our bodies. And this, together with exhalations from coal fires, and the various fossils wherein we abound, doth greatly contribute to render us scorbutic and hypochondriac.

90. There are some who derive all diseases from the scurvy,

[72] Dr. William Musgrave (1655—1721), an eminent physician, Secretary to the Royal Society, and a contributor to the *Philos. Trans.* He settled at Exeter in 1691, and practised there for thirty years with a high reputation. See Munk's *Roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London* (pp. 446—448) for an interesting account of Dr. Musgrave and his works.

which indeed must be allowed to create or mimic most other maladies. Boerhaave[73] tells us, it produceth pleuritic colic, nephritic, hepatic pains, various fevers, hot, malignant, intermitting dysenteries, faintings, anxieties, dropsies, consumptions, convulsions, palsies, fluxes of blood. In a word, it may be said to contain the seeds and origin of almost all distempers. Insomuch that a medicine which cures all sorts of scurvy may be presumed good for most maladies.

91. The scurvy doth not only in variety of symptoms imitate most distempers, but also, when come to a height, in degree of virulence equal the most malignant. Of this we have a remarkable proof in that horrible description of the scorbutic patients in the hospitals of Paris, given by Monsieur Poupart[74], in the Memoirs of the Royal Academy of Sciences, for the year 1699. That author thinks he saw some resemblance in it to the plague of Athens[75]. It is hard to imagine anything more dreadful than the case of those men, rotting alive by scurvy in its supreme degree. To obviate such putrefaction, I believe the most effectual method would be, to embalm (if one may so say) the living body with tar-water copiously drunk; and this belief is not without experience.

92. It is the received opinion that the animal salts of a sound body are of a neutral, bland, and benign nature: that is, the salts in the juices past the *primæ viæ* are neither acid or alkaline, having been subdued by the constitution, and changed into a third nature. Where the constitution wants force to do this, the aliment is not duly assimilated: and, so far as the salts retain their pristine qualities, sickly symptoms ensue, acids and alkalies not perfectly subdued producing weak ferments in the juices. Hence scurvy, cachexy, and a long train of ills.

93. A cachexy or ill habit is much of the same kind with the scurvy, proceeds from the same causes, and is attended with like symptoms, which are so manifold and various, that the scurvy may

[73] *Praxis Medica*—'De Scorbuto,' tom. V. pp. 101—17.

[74] Francis Poupart (1661—1709), the celebrated French anatomist, and member of the Academy, was a frequent contributor, especially on comparative anatomy, to the *Journal des Savans*, and the *Mémoires de l'Académie*. The paper referred to, *Étranges Effets du Scorbut arrivez à Paris en* 1699, appeared in the *Mémoires* in November of that year, p. 237. It is also contained in the *Philos. Trans.* No. 318.

[75] Lucret. *De Rerum Nat.* VI. 1136—1284.

well be looked on as a general cachexy, infecting the whole habit, and vitiating all the digestions. Some have reckoned as many sorts of the scurvy as there are taints of the blood. Others have supposed it a collection of all illnesses together. Some suppose it an accumulation of several diseases *in fieri*. Others take it for an assemblage of the relics of old distempers.

94. But thus much is certain, the cure of the scurvy is no more to be attempted by strongly active medicines, than (to use the similitude of an ingenious writer) a thorn in the flesh, or pitch on silk, to be removed by force. The viscid humour must be gently resolved and diluted, the tone of the vessels recovered by a moderate stimulation, and the tender fibres and capillary vessels gradually cleared from the concreted stuff that adheres and obstructs them. All which is in the aptest manner performed by a watery diluent, containing a fine vegetable soap. And although a complete cure by alteratives, operating on the small capillaries, and by insensible discharges, must require length of time, yet the good effect of this medicine on cachectic and scorbutic persons is soon perceived, by the change it produceth in their pale discoloured looks, giving a florid healthy countenance in less time than perhaps any other medicine.

95. It is supposed by physicians that the immediate cause of the scurvy lies in the blood, the fibrous part of which is too thick and the serum too thin and sharp; and that hence ariseth the great difficulty in the cure, because in the correcting of one part regard must be had to the other. It is well known how extremely difficult it is to cure an inveterate scurvy: how many scorbutic patients have grown worse by an injudicious course of evacuations: how many are even rendered incurable by the treatment of inconsiderate physicians; and how difficult, tedious, and uncertain, the cure is in the hands even of the best, who are obliged to use such variety and change of medicines, in the different stages of that malady: which nevertheless may be cured (if I may judge by what I have experienced) by the sole, regular, constant, copious use of tar-water.

96. Tar-water moderately inspissates with its balsamic virtue, and renders mild the thin and sharp part of the blood, the same as a soapy medicine dissolves the grumous concretions of the fibrous part. As a balsam it destroys the ulcerous acrimony of the

humours, and as a deobstruent it opens and cleans the vessels, restores their tone, and strengthens the digestion, whose defects are the principal cause of scurvy and cachexy.

97. In the cure of the scurvy the principal aim is to subdue the acrimony of the blood and juices. But, as this acrimony proceeds from different causes, or even opposite, as acid and alkaline, what is good in one sort of scurvy proves dangerous or even mortal in another. It is well known that hot antiscorbutics, where the juices of the body are alkalescent, increase the disease. And sour fruits and vegetables produce a like effect in the scurvy, caused by an acid acrimony. Hence fatal blunders are committed by unwary practitioners, who, not distinguishing the nature of the disease, do frequently aggravate instead of curing it. If I may trust what trials I have been able to make, this water is good in the several kinds of scurvy, acid, alkaline, and muriatic, and I believe it the only medicine that cures them all without doing hurt to any. As it contains a volatile acid (sect. 7) with a fine volatile oil, why may not a medicine cool in one part and warm in another be a remedy to either extreme (sect. 72)? I have observed it to produce a kindly genial warmth without heat, a thing to be aimed at in all sorts of scurvy. Besides, the balsam in tar-water sheathes all scorbutic salts alike: and its great virtues as a digester and deobstruent are of general use in all scorbutic, and I may add, in all chronical cases whatsoever.

98. I cannot be sure that I have tried it in a scrofulous case, though I have tried it successfully in one that I suspected to be so. And I apprehend it would be very serviceable in such disorders. For although Dr. Gibbs in his treatise on the King's Evil[76] derives that disease from a coagulating acid, which is also agreeable to the opinion of some other physicians, and although tar-water contain an acid, yet, as it is a soap (sect. 58), it resolves instead of coagulating the juices of the body.

99. For hysterical and hypochondriacal disorders so frequent among us, it is commonly supposed that all acids are bad. But I will venture to except the acid soap of tar-water, having found by my own experience and that of many others, that it raises the

[76] *Observations of Various Cases of Scrophulous Disorders, commonly called the King's Evil.* London, 1702.

spirits, and is an excellent anti-hysteric, nor less innocent than potent, which cannot be said of those others in common use, that often leave people worse than they found them.

100. In a high degree of scurvy a mercurial salivation is looked on by many as the only cure; which, by the vehement shock it gives the whole frame, and the sensible secretion it produceth, may be thought more adequate to such an effect. But the disorder occasioned by that violent process, it is to be feared, may never be got over. The immediate danger, the frequent bad effects, the extreme trouble and nice care attending such a course, do very deservedly make people afraid of it. And though the sensible secretion therein be so great, yet in a longer tract of time the use of tar-water may produce as great a discharge of scorbutic salts by urine and by perspiration—the effect of which last, though not so sensible, may yet be greater than that of salivation; especially if it be true that in common life insensible perspiration is to nutrition, and all sensible excretions, as five to three.

101. Many hysteric and scorbutic ailments, many taints contracted by themselves, or inherited from their ancestors, afflict the people of condition in these islands, often rendering them, upon the whole, much more unhappy than those whom poverty and labour have ranked in the lowest lot of life, which ailments might be safely removed or relieved by the sole use of tar-water; and those lives which seem hardly worth living for bad appetite, low spirits, restless nights, wasting pains and anxieties, be rendered easy and comfortable.

102. As the nerves are instruments of sensation, it follows that spasms in the nerves may produce all symptoms, and therefore a disorder in the nervous system shall imitate all distempers, and occasion, in appearance, an asthma for instance, a pleurisy, or a fit of the stone. Now, whatever is good for the nerves in general is good against all such symptoms. But tar-water, as it includes in an eminent degree the virtues of warm gums and resins, is of great use for comforting and strengthening the nerves (sect. 86), curing twitches in the nervous fibres, cramps also, and numbness in the limbs, removing anxieties, and promoting sleep: in all which cases I have known it very successful.

103. This safe and cheap medicine suits all circumstances and all constitutions, operating easily, curing without disturbing,

raising the spirits without depressing them, a circumstance that deserves repeated attention, especially in these climates, where strong liquors[77] so fatally and so frequently produce those very distresses they are designed to remedy; and, if I am not misinformed, even among the ladies themselves, who are truly much to be pitied. Their condition of life makes them a prey to imaginary woes, which never fail to grow up in minds unexercised and unemployed. To get rid of these, it is said, there are who betake themselves to distilled spirits. And it is not improbable they are led gradually to the use of those poisons by a certain complaisant pharmacy, too much used in the modern practice, palsy drops, poppy cordial, plague water, and such like, which being in truth nothing but drams disguised, yet, coming from the apothecaries, are considered only as medicines.

104. The soul of man was supposed by many ancient sages to be thrust into the human body as into a prison, for punishment of past offences. But the worst prison is the body of an indolent epicure, whose blood is inflamed by fermented liquors (sect. 66) and high sauces, or rendered putrid, sharp, and corrosive, by a stagnation of the animal juices through sloth and indolence; whose membranes are irritated by pungent salts; whose mind is agitated by painful oscillations of the nervous system (sect. 86), and whose nerves are mutually affected by the irregular passions of his mind. This ferment in the animal economy darkens and confounds the intellect. It produceth vain terrors and vain conceits, and stimulates the soul with mad desires, which, not being natural, nothing in nature can satisfy. No wonder, therefore, there are so many fine persons of both sexes, shining themselves, and shone on by fortune, who are inwardly miserable and sick of life.

105. The hardness of stubbed vulgar constitutions renders them insensible of a thousand things that fret and gall those delicate people, who, as if their skin was peeled off, feel to the quick everything that touches them. The remedy for this exquisite and painful sensibility is commonly sought from fermented, perhaps from distilled, liquors, which render many lives wretched that would

[77] Note what is said of the prevalence, causes, and cure of drunkenness in these Islands, sect. 103—109.

otherwise have been only ridiculous. The tender nerves and low spirits of such poor creatures would be much relieved by the use of tar-water, which might prolong and cheer their lives. I do therefore recommend to them the use of a cordial, not only safe and innocent, but giving health and spirits as surely as other cordials destroy them.

106. I do verily think there is not any other medicine whatsoever so effectual to restore a crazy constitution, and cheer a dreary mind, or so likely to subvert that gloomy empire of the spleen (sect. 103) which tyrannizeth over the better sort (as they are called) of these free nations; and maketh them, in spite of their liberty and property, more wretched slaves than even the subjects of absolute power, who breathe clear air in a sunny climate[78]. While men of low degree often enjoy a tranquillity and content that no advantage of birth or fortune can equal. Such, indeed, was the case while the rich alone could afford to be debauched; but when even beggars became debauchees, the case was altered.

107. The public virtue and spirit of the British legislature never shewed itself more conspicuous in any act than in that for suppressing the immoderate use of [[79] distilled spirits] among the people, whose strength and numbers constitute the true wealth of a nation: though evasive arts will, it is feared, prevail so long as distilled spirits of any kind are allowed, the character of Englishmen in general being that of Brutus, *Quicquid vult, valde vult.* But why should such a canker be tolerated in the vitals of a state, under any pretence or in any shape whatsoever? Better by far the whole present set of distillers were pensioners of the public, and their trade abolished by law; since all the benefit thereof put together would not balance the hundredth part of its mischief.

108. To prove the destructive effects of such spirits with regard both to the human species and individuals, we need not go so far as our Colonies, or the savage natives of America. Plain proof may be had nearer home. For, albeit there is in every town or district throughout England some tough dram-drinker, set up as the devil's decoy, to draw in proselytes; yet the ruined health and

[78] Cf. *Alciphron*, Dial. II. sect. 17.
[79] 'spirituous liquors'—in the early editions.

morals, and the beggary of such numbers, evidently shew that
need no other enemy to complete our destruction, than this che
luxury at the lower end of the state, and that a nation lighted
at both ends must soon be consumed.

109. It is much to be lamented that our insulars, who act
think so much for themselves, should yet, from grossness of
and diet, grow stupid or dote sooner than other people, who
virtue of elastic air, water drinking, and light food, preserve th
faculties to extreme old age; an advantage which may perhaps
approached, if not equalled, even in these regions, by tar-wat
temperance, and early hours. The last is a sure addition to l
not only in regard of time, which, being taken from sleep,
image of death[80], is added to the waking hours, but also in reg
of longevity and duration in the vulgar sense. I may say too
regard of spirit and vivacity, which, within the same compass
duration, may truly and properly be affirmed to add to man's li
it being manifest, that one man, by a brisker motion of his spi
and succession of his ideas, shall live more in one hour than
other in two: and that the quantity of life is to be estimated,
merely from the duration, but also from the intenseness of livi
Which intense living, or, if I may so say, lively life, is not m
promoted by early hours as a regimen, than by tar-water as a c
dial; which acts, not only as a slow medicine, but hath also
immediate and cheerful effect on the spirits (sect. 66).

110. It must be owned, the light attracted, secreted, and
tained in tar (sect. 8, 29, 40), and afterwards drawn off in its fin
balsamic particles, by the gentle menstruum of cold water, is
a violent and sudden medicine, always to produce its effect
once (such, by irritating, often do more mischief than good),
a safe and mild alterative, which penetrates the whole syste
opens, heals, and strengthens the remote vessels, alters and p
pels their contents, and enters the minutest capillaries, and c
not therefore, otherwise than by degrees and in time, work a ra
cal cure of chronic distempers. It gives nevertheless speedy re
in most cases, as I have found by myself and many others. I h

[80] So Shelley in *Queen Mab*—

'How wonderful is Death,
Death and his brother Sleep!
One, pale as yonder waning moon,
With lips of lurid blue;
The other, rosy as the morn
When throned on ocean's wave,
It blushes o'er the world:
Yet both so passing wonderful!'

seen surprised to see persons fallen away and languishing under a bad digestion, after a few weeks recover a good stomach, and with it flesh and strength, so as to seem renewed, by the drinking of tar-water. The strength and quantity of this water to be taken by each individual person is best determined from experience. And as for the time of taking, I never knew any evil ensue from its being continued ever so long; but, on the contrary, many and great advantages, which sometimes would not perhaps begin to shew themselves till it had been taken two or three months.

111. We learn from Pliny that in the first ferment of new wine or *mustum*, the ancients were wont to sprinkle it with powdered resin, which gave it a certain sprightliness, *quædam saporis acumina*. This was esteemed a great improver of its odour and taste, and was, I doubt not, of its salubrity also. The brown old resin, that is to say hardened tar, as being more easily pulverized and sifted, was most in request for this purpose. They used likewise to season their wine vessels with pitch or resin. And I make no doubt that if our vintners would contrive to medicate their wines with the same ingredients, they might improve and preserve them with less trouble and expense to themselves, and less danger to others. He that would know more particulars of this matter may consult Pliny and Columella[81]. I shall only add, that I doubt not a similar improvement may be made of malt liquor.

112. The ῥητίνη of Theophrastus and *resina* of Pliny are sometimes used in a general sense, to signify all sorts of oily viscid exudations from plants or trees. The crude watery juice that riseth early in the spring is gradually ripened and inspissated by the solar heat, becoming in orderly succession with the seasons an oil, a balsam, and at last a resin. And it is observed by chemists that turpentine dissolved over a gentle fire is, by the constant operation of heat, successively transformed into oil, balsam, pitch, and hard friable resin, which will incorporate with oil or rectified spirit, but not with water.

113. Sir John Floyer[82] remarks, that we want a method for the

[81] See Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* lib. XIV. c. 25; and Columella, *De Re Rustica*, lib. XII. c. 23, 24.

[82] Sir John Floyer (1649—1734), an eminent English physician. See his *Touchstone of Medicines* (1687), pt. III. He brought the cold bath again into fashion, and 'rode his hobby so hard as to attribute the prevalence of rickets in England, at the time he wrote (about 1700), to the abandonment of total immersion in baptism.' See Macpherson's *Baths and Wells of Europe*, p. 53.

use of turpentine: and again, he who shall hit, saith he, on the pleasantest method of giving turpentine will do great cures in the gout, stone, catarrhs, dropsies, and cold scurvies, rheumatisms, ulcers, and obstructions of the glands. Lastly, he subjoins, that, for the use of altering and amending the juices and fibres, it must be given frequently, and in such small quantities at a time, and in so commodious a manner, as will agree best with the stomach (sect. 9), stay longest in the body, and not purge itself off; for large doses (saith he) go through too quick, and besides offend the head. Now, the infusion of tar or turpentine in cold water seems to supply the very method that was wanted, as it leaves the more unctuous and gross parts behind (sect. 47), which might offend the stomach, intestines, and head; and, as it may be easily taken, and as often, and in such quantity and such degree of strength, as suits the case of the patient. Nor should it seem that the fine spirit and volatile oil, obtained by infusion of tar (sect. 7, 42, 58), is inferior to that of turpentine, to which it superadds the virtue of wood soot, which is known to be very great with respect to the head and nerves; and this appears evident from the manner of obtaining tar (sect. 13). And as the fine volatile parts of tar or turpentine are drawn off by infusion in cold water, and easily conveyed throughout the whole system of the human body; so it should seem the same method may be used with all sorts of balsams or resins whatsoever, as the readiest, easiest, and most inoffensive, as well as in many cases the most effectual way of obtaining and imparting their virtues.

114. After having said so much of the uses of tar, I must further add that, being rubbed on them, it is an excellent preservative of the teeth and gums: [[83]that it sweetens the breath, and] that it clears and strengthens the voice. And, as its effects are various and useful, so there is nothing to be feared from the operation of an alterative so mild and friendly to nature. It was a wise maxim of certain ancient philosophers, that diseases ought not to be irritated by medicines (sect. 103). But no medicine disturbs the animal economy less than this, which, if I may trust my own experience, never produces any disorder in a patient when rightly taken.

115. I knew indeed a person who took a large glass of tar-water

[83] Added in second edition.

ast before breakfast, which gave him an invincible nausea and disgust, although he had before received the greatest benefit from t. But, if the tar-water be taken and made in the manner prescribed at the beginning of this Essay, it will, if I mistake not, have enough of the salt to be useful, and little enough of the oil to be inoffensive. [[84]I mean my own manner of making it, and not the American[85], which makes it sometimes too strong and sometimes too weak; which tar-water, however it might serve as there used, merely for a preservative against the small-pox, yet may not be fit to use in all those various cases wherein I have found tar-water so successful.] Persons more delicate than ordinary may render it palatable, by mixing a drop of the chemical oil of nutmegs, or a spoonful of mountain-wine in each glass. It may not be amiss to observe that I have known some, whose nice stomachs could not bear it in the morning, take it at night going to bed without any inconvenience [[86]and that with some it agrees best warm, with others cold]. [[87]For outward washes and fomentations, it may be made stronger, as by pouring on warm water; also for brute beasts, as horses, in whose disorders I have found it very useful, I believe more so than that bituminous substance called Barbadoes tar.]

116. In very dangerous and acute cases much may be taken and often; as far as the stomach can bear. But in chronical cases, about half a pint night and morning may suffice [[88]or, in case so large a dose should prove disagreeable, half the quantity may be taken at four times, to wit, in the morning early, at night going to bed, and about two hours after dinner and breakfast]. A medicine of so great virtue in so many different disorders, and especially in that grand enemy the fever, must needs be a benefit to mankind in general. There are nevertheless three sorts of people to whom I would peculiarly recommend it: seafaring persons, ladies, and men of studious and sedentary lives.

117. To sailors and all seafaring persons, who are subject to scorbutic disorders and putrid fevers, especially in long southern voyages, I am persuaded this tar-water would be beneficial. And this may deserve particular notice in the present course of marine

[84] Added in second edition.
[85] Cf. sect. 1.
[86] Omitted in the later editions.
[87] Added in the later editions.
[88] Added in second edition.

expeditions, when so many of our countrymen have perished by such distempers, contracted at sea and in foreign climates. Which, it is probable, might have been prevented by the copious use of tar-water.

118. This same water will also give charitable relief to the ladies (sect. 103), who often want it more than the parish poor; being many of them never able to make a good meal, and sitting pale, puny, and forbidden like ghosts, at their own table, victims of vapours and indigestion.

119. Studious persons also, pent up in narrow holes, breathing bad air, and stooping over their books, are much to be pitied. As they are debarred the free use of air and exercise, this I will venture to recommend as the best succedaneum to both. Though it were to be wished that modern scholars would, like the ancients, meditate and converse more in walks and gardens and open air, which upon the whole would perhaps be no hinderance to their learning, and a great advantage to their health. My own sedentary course of life had long since thrown me into an ill habit, attended with many ailments, particularly a nervous colic, which rendered my life a burthen, and the more so, because my pains were exasperated by exercise. But, since the use of tar-water, I find, though not a perfect recovery from my old and rooted illness, yet such a gradual return of health and ease, that I esteem my having taken this medicine the greatest of all temporal blessings, and am convinced that, under Providence, I owe my life to it.

120. [89]In the distilling of turpentine and other balsams by a gentle heat, it hath been observed that there riseth first an acid spirit (sect. 7) that will mix with water; which spirit, except the fire be very gentle, is lost. This grateful acid spirit that first comes over is, as a learned chemist and physician[90] informs us, highly refrigeratory, diuretic, sudorific, balsamic, or preservative

[89] Having, in the preceding sections, deduced the catholic efficacy of Tar-water, Berkeley, in sect. 120—230, speculates on the physical explanation of its medicinal properties. The speculation carries him through the theory of Acids and Salts (sect. 120—156); and of Air, that common seminary of all life-giving elements (sect. 137—151); to Pure Æther, Light, or Vital Fire (sect. 152—230)—according to him, the *ultimate* physical or instrumental cause of motion.

[90] Bœrhaave.

from putrefaction, excellent in nephritic cases, and for quenching thirst—all which virtues are contained in the cold infusion which draws forth from tar only its fine flower or quintessence, if I may so say, or the native vegetable spirit, together with a little volatile oil.

121. The distinguishing principle of all vegetables—that whereon their peculiar smell, taste, and specific properties depend—seems to be some extremely fine and subtle spirit, whose immediate vehicle is an exceeding thin volatile oil; which is itself detained in a grosser and more viscid resin or balsam, lodged in proper cells in the bark and seeds, and most abounding in autumn or winter, after the crude juices have been thoroughly concocted, ripened, and impregnated with solar light. The spirit itself is by some supposed to be an oil highly subtilized, so as to mix with water. But such volatile oil is not the spirit, but only its vehicle. Since aromatic oils being long exposed to air will lose their specific smell and taste, which fly off with the spirit or vegetable salt, without any sensible diminution of the oil.

122. Those volatile salts that are set free and raised by a gentle heat may justly be supposed essential (sect. 8), and to have pre-existed in the vegetable; whereas the lixivial fixed salts, obtained by the incineration of the subject, whose natural constituent parts have been altered or destroyed by the extreme force of fire, are, by later chemists, upon very good grounds, supposed not to have pre-existed therein—all such salts appearing, from the experiments of Signor Redi[91], not to preserve the virtues of the respective vegetable subjects; and to be alike purgative and in an equal degree, whatsoever may be the shape of their points, whether sharp or obtuse. But, although fixed or lixivial salts may not contain the original properties of the subject, yet volatile salts, raised by a slight heat from vegetables, are allowed to preserve their native virtues: and such salts are readily imbibed by water.

123. The most volatile of the salts, and the most attenuated part of the oil may be supposed the first and readiest to impregnate a cold infusion (sect. 1, 7). And this will assist us to account for the virtues of tar-water. That volatile acid in vege-

[91] Francesco Redi (1626—1697), an eminent Italian naturalist and poet—a member of the Della Crusca. See his *Experimenta Naturalia* (1675). His collected works occupy seven volumes.

tables, which resists putrefaction and is their great preservative, is detained in a subtle oil, miscible with water; which oil is itself imprisoned in the resin or grosser part of the tar, from which it is easily set free and obtained pure by cold water.

124. The mild native acids are observed more kindly to work upon, and more thoroughly to dissolve metallic bodies, than the strongest acid spirits produced by a vehement fire; and it may be suspected they have the same advantage as a medicine. And, as no acid, by the observation of some of the best chemists, can be obtained from the substance of animals thoroughly assimilated, it should follow that the acids received into a healthy body must be quite subdued and changed by the vital powers: but it is easier to subdue and assimilate the gentler than the stronger acids (sect. 48).

125. I am very sensible that on such subjects arguments fall short of evidence[92]: and that mine fall short even of what they might have been if I enjoyed better health, or those opportunities of a learned commerce from which I am cut off in this remote corner. I shall nevertheless go on as I have begun, and proceed, by reason, by conjecture, and by authority, to cast the best light I can on the obscure paths that lie in my way.

126. [93]Sir Isaac Newton[94], Boerhaave, and Homberg[95], are all agreed that the Acid is a fine subtle substance, pervading the whole terraqueous globe; which produceth divers kinds of bodies, as it is united to different subjects. This, according to Homberg,

[92] Berkeley's critics complained of his defective standard of inductive proof, in dealing with the experiments from which he infers the catholicity of Tar-water as a medicine.

[93] Sect. 126—136 treat of the theory of acids, salts, and alkalies, according to Newton, Böerhaave, and Homberg.

[94] See Newton's tract of about two pages, *De Natura Acidorum*, published apparently about 1692. It was followed by another equally brief, entitled *Cogitationes Variæ*, among which are suggestions on chemical subjects. Some of these reappear in the Queries at the end of his *Optics*. These brief tracts contain nearly all that Newton published relating to chemistry.

[95] William Homberg (1652—1715), an eminent French chemist, and first physician to the Duke of Orleans—born in Java. His writings consist of communications to the French Academy, whose *Mémoires* contain thirty-eight contributions (1699—1714) by M. Homberg. These relate almost exclusively to chemical questions, including several on the theory of acids and salts, and on vegetable physiology. The *Histoire de l'Académie* (1715) contains an Eloge on Homberg. In Kopp's *Geschichte der Chemie* we have some account of him. Berkeley seems to have derived many of his chemical notions from Homberg, who was a skilful experimenter and good observer, but his inferences were often absurd. He held the old view of the *tria prima*—salt, sulphur, and mercury—of which, in different proportions, all material things were supposed to consist.

is the pure salt, salt the principle, in itself similar and uniform, but never found alone. And although this principle be called the salt of the earth, yet it should seem it may more properly be called the salt of the air, since earth turned up and lying fallow receives it from the air. And it should seem that this is the great principle of vegetation, derived into the earth from all sorts of manures, as well as from the air. The acid is allowed to be the cause of fermentation in all fermented liquors. Why, therefore, may it not be supposed to ferment the earth, and to constitute that fine penetrating principle, which introduces and assimilates the food of plants, and is so fugitive as to escape all the filtrations and perquisitions of the most nice observers?

127. It is the doctrine of Sir Isaac Newton and Monsieur Homberg that, as the watery acid is that which renders salt soluble in water, so it is that same which joined to the earthy part makes it a salt. Let it therefore be considered that the organs of plants are tubes (sect. 30, 31, 35)—the filling, unfolding, and distending whereof, by liquors, doth constitute what is called the vegetation or growth of the plant. But earth itself is not soluble in water, so as to form one vegetable fluid therewith. Therefore the particles of earth must be joined with a watery acid; that is, they must become salts, in order to dissolve in water; that so, in the form of a vegetable juice, they may pass through the strainers and tubes of the root into the body of the plant, swelling and distending its parts and organs, that is, increasing its bulk. Therefore the vegetable matter of the earth is in effect earth changed into salt. And to render earth fertile is to cause many of its particles to assume a saline form.

128. Hence it is observed, there are more salts in the root than in the bark, more salts in vegetables during the spring than in the autumn or winter; the crude saline juices being in the summer months partly evaporated, and partly ripened, by the action and mixture of light. Hence also it appears why the dividing of earth, so as to enlarge its surface, whereby it may admit more acid from the air, is of such use in promoting vegetation: and why ashes, lime, and burnt clay are found so profitable manures—fire being in reality the acid, as is proved in the sequel (sect. 202). Marls also and shells are useful, forasmuch as those alkaline bodies attract the acid, and raise an effervescence with it, thereby pro-

moting a fermentation in the glebe. The excrements of animals and putrid vegetables do in like manner contribute to vegetation, by increasing the salts of the earth. And where fallows are well broken, and lie long to receive the acid of the air into all their parts; this alone will be sufficient to change many terrene particles into salts, and consequently render them soluble in water, and therefore a fit aliment for vegetables.

129. The acid, saith Homberg, is always joined to some sulphur, which determines it to this or that species, producing different salts, as it is the vegetable, bituminous, or metallic sulphur. Even the alkaline, whether volatile or lixivial salts, are supposed to be nothing but this same acid strictly detained by oil and earth, in spite of the extreme force of fire, which lodgeth in them, without being able to dislodge some remains of the acid.

130. Salts, according to Sir Isaac Newton, are dry earth and watery acid united by attraction, the acid rendering them soluble in water (sect. 127). He supposeth the watery acid to flow round the terrestrial part, as the ocean doth round the earth, being attracted thereby; and compares each particle of salt to a chaos, whereof the innermost part is hard and earthy, but the surface soft and watery. Whatever attracts and is attracted most strongly is an acid in his sense.

131. It seems impossible to determine the figures of particular salts. All acid solvents, together with the dissolved bodies, are apt to shoot into certain figures. And the figures in which the fossil salts crystallize have been supposed the proper natural shapes of them and their acids. But Homberg hath clearly shewed the contrary: forasmuch as the same acid dissolving different bodies assumes different shapes. Spirit of nitre, for instance, having dissolved copper, shoots into hexagonal crystals; the same having dissolved iron, shoots into irregular squares; and again, having dissolved silver, forms thin crystals of a triangular figure.

132. Homberg, nevertheless, holds in general, that acids are shaped like daggers, and alkalies like sheaths: and that, moving in the same liquor, the daggers run into the sheaths fitted to receive them with such violence as to raise that effervescence observed in the mixture of acids and alkalies. But it seems very difficult to conceive how or why the mere configuration of daggers and sheaths floating in the same liquor should cause

the former to rush with such vehemence, and direct their points so aptly into the latter, any more than a parcel of spigots and fossets floating together in the same water should rush one into the other.

133. It should seem rather that the vehement attraction which Sir Isaac Newton attributes to all acids, whereby he supposeth them to rush towards, penetrate, shake, and divide the most solid bodies, and to ferment the liquid of vegetables, could better account for this phenomenon. It is in this attraction that Sir Isaac placeth all their activity: and indeed it should seem, the figures of salts were not of such efficacy in producing their effects, as the strong active powers whereby they are agitated and do agitate other bodies. Especially if it be true (what was before remarked) that lixivious salts are alike purgative, whatever may be the shape of their angles, whether more or less acute or obtuse.

134. Sir Isaac Newton accounts for the watery acid's making earthy corpuscles soluble in water, by supposing the acid to be a mean between earth and water, its particles greater than those of water, and less than those of earth, and strongly to attract both. But perhaps there is no necessary reason for supposing the parts of the acid grosser than the parts of water, in order to produce this effect; may not this as well be accounted for, by giving them only a strong attraction or cohesion with the bodies to which they are joined?

135. The acid spirit or salt, that mighty instrument in the hand of nature, residing in the air, and diffused throughout that whole element, is discernible also in many parts of the earth, particularly in fossils, such as sulphur, vitriol, and alum. It was already observed, from Homberg, that this acid is never found pure, but hath always sulphur joined with it, and is classed by the difference of its sulphurs, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal.

136. Salts are vulgarly reckoned the most active of chemical principles. But Homberg derives all their activity from the sulphurs joined with them. From which also, as hath been said, he derives all their kinds and differences (sect. 129). Salt, water, oil, and earth seem to be originally the same in all vegetables. All the difference, according to the chemists[96], ariseth from a spirit

[96] These chemists, here spoken of as believing in an *archæus*, were the followers of

residing in the oil, called the *rector* or *archæus*. This is otherwise called by chemists *ens primum*, or the native spirit; whereon depend, and wherein are contained, the peculiar flavour and odour, the specific qualities and virtues, of the plant.

137. These native spirits or vegetable souls are all breathed or exhaled into the Air[97], which seems the receptacle as well as source of all sublunary forms, the great mass or chaos which imparts and receives them. The air or atmosphere that surrounds our earth contains a mixture of all the active volatile parts of the whole habitable world, that is, of all vegetables, minerals, and animals. Whatever perspires, corrupts, or exhales, impregnates the air; which, being acted upon by the solar fire, produceth within itself all sorts of chemical operations, dispensing again those salts and spirits in new generations, which it had received from putrefactions.

138. The perpetual oscillations of this elastic and restless element operate without ceasing on all things that have life, whether animal or vegetable, keeping their fibres, vessels, and fluids in a motion, always changing; as heat, cold, moisture, dryness, and other causes alter the elasticity of the air: which accounts, it must be owned, for many effects. But there are many more which must be derived from other principles or qualities in the air. Thus iron and copper are corroded and gather rust in the air, and bodies of all sorts are dissolved or corrupted, which sheweth an acid to abound and diffuse itself throughout the air.

139. By this same air fire is kindled, the lamp of life preserved, respiration, digestion, nutrition, the pulse of the heart, and motion of all the muscles seem to be performed. Air therefore is a general agent, not only exerting its own, but calling forth the qualities or powers of all other bodies, by a division, comminution, and agitation of their particles, causing them to fly off and become volatile and active.

140. Nothing ferments, vegetates, or putrifies without air, which

Paracelsus. The *archæus* of Paracelsus seems to have been a spiritual (not spirituous) being. Berkeley regards it here as the latter.

[97] In sect. 135—152, Berkeley contemplates Air as the receptacle of the Acid or vegetable soul in which the virtue of tar-water consists. The now current chemistry of the atmosphere was then unknown.

operates with all the virtues of the bodies included in it; that is, of all nature; there being no drug, salutary or poisonous, whose virtues are not breathed into the air. The air therefore is an active mass of numberless different principles, the general source of corruption and generation; on one hand dividing, abrading, and carrying off the particles of bodies, that is, corrupting or dissolving them; on the other, producing new ones into being; destroying and bestowing forms without intermission.

141. The seeds of things seem to lie latent in the air, ready to appear and produce their kind, whenever they light on a proper matrix. The extremely small seeds of fern, mosses, mushrooms, and some other plants are concealed and wafted about in the air, every part whereof seems replete with seeds of one kind or other. The whole atmosphere seems alive. There is everywhere acid to corrode, and seed to engender. Iron will rust, and mould will grow in all places. Virgin earth becomes fertile, crops of new plants ever and anon shew themselves; all which demonstrates the air to be a common seminary and receptacle of all vivifying principles.

142. Air may also be said to be the seminary of minerals and metals, as it is of vegetables. Mr. Boyle[98] informs us that the exhausted ores of tin and iron being exposed to the air become again impregnated with metal, and that ore of alum having lost its salt, recovers it after the same manner. And numberless instances there are of salts produced by the air; that vast collection or treasury of active principles, from which all sublunary bodies seem to derive their forms, and on which animals depend for their life and breath.

143. That there is some latent vivifying spirit dispersed throughout the air common experience sheweth; insomuch as it is necessary both to vegetables and animals (sect. 138, 139), whether terrestrial or aquatic, neither beasts, insects, birds, nor fishes being able to subsist without air. Nor doth all air suffice, there being some quality or ingredient of which when air is

[98] In his *Observations about the growth of Metals in their ore, exposed to the air*. See *Works*, vol. III. pp. 459—462. Robert Boyle (1626—1692), another illustrious Irishman, frequently referred to by Berkeley—natural philosopher, chemist, and theologian, one of the founders of the Royal Society, and founder of the 'Boyle Lectures.' His Life and Works, edited by Dr. Birch, appeared in five vols. (1744).

deprived it becometh unfit to maintain either life or flame. And this even though the air should retain its elasticity; which, by the bye, is an argument that air doth not act only as an antagonist to the intercostal muscles. It hath both that and many other uses. It gives and preserves a proper tone to the vessels: this elastic fluid promotes all secretions: its oscillations keep every part in motion: it pervades and actuates the whole animal system, producing great variety of effects, and even opposite in different parts, cooling at the same time and heating, distending and contracting, coagulating and resolving, giving and taking, sustaining life and impairing it, pressing without and expanding within, abrading some parts, at the same time insinuating and supplying others, producing various vibrations in the fibres and ferments in the fluids; all which must needs ensue from such a subtle, active, heterogeneous, and elastic fluid.

144. But there is, as we before observed, some one quality or ingredient in the air, on which life more immediately and principally depends. What that is, though men are not agreed, yet it is agreed it must be the same thing that supports the vital and the common flame; it being found that when air, by often breathing in it, is become unfit for the one, it will no longer serve for the other. The like is observable in poisonous damps or steams, wherein flame cannot be kindled, as is evident in the Grotto del Cane[99] near Naples. And here it occurs, to recommend the plunging them in cold water, as an experiment to be tried on persons affected by breathing a poisonous vapour in old vaults, mines, deep holes, or cavities under ground: which, I am apt to think, might save the lives of several, by what I have seen practised on a dog convulsed, and in all appearance dead, but instantly reviving on being taken out of the above-mentioned Grotto, and thrown into a lake adjacent.

145. Air, the general menstruum and seminary, seemeth to be only an aggregate of the volatile parts of all natural beings, which, variously combined and agitated, produce many various effects. Small particles in a near and close situation strongly act upon each other, attracting, repelling, vibrating. Hence

[99] The celebrated *Grotta del Cane* is so charged with carbonic acid gas that light and animal life are speedily extinguished in it. It is described by Pliny, and seems to have been visited by Berkeley in his Italian tour.

divers fermentations, and all the variety of meteors, tempests, and concussions both of earth and firmament. Nor is the microcosm less affected thereby. Being pent up in the viscera, vessels, and membranes of the body, by its salts, sulphurs, and elastic power, it engenders cholics, spasms, hysteric disorders, and other maladies.

146. The specific quality of air is taken to be permanent elasticity. Mr. Boyle is expressly of this opinion. And yet whether there be any such thing as permanently elastic air may be doubted, there being many things which seem to rob the air of this quality, or at least lessen and suspend its exertion. The salts and sulphurs, for instance, that float in the air abate much of its elasticity by their attraction.

147. Upon the whole, it is manifest that air is no distinct element, but a mass or mixture of things the most heterogeneous and even opposite to each other (sect. 137, 145), which become air by acquiring an elasticity and volatility from the attraction of some active subtle substance—whether it be called fire, æther, light, or the vital spirit of the world; in like manner as the particles of antimony, of themselves not volatile, are carried off in sublimation, and rendered volatile by cohering with the particles of sal ammoniac. But action and reaction being equal, the spring of this ethereal spirit is diminished by being imparted. Its velocity and subtlety are also less from its being mixed with grosser particles. Hence sound moves slower than light, as mud than water.

148. Whether air be only freed and fixed, or generated and destroyed, it is certain that air begins and ceases to exert or shew itself. Much by experiments seems to be generated, not only from animals, fruits, and vegetables, but also from hard bodies. And it is observed by Sir Isaac Newton, that air produced from hard bodies is most elastic. The transmutation of elements, each into other, hath been anciently held[1]. In Plutarch we find it was the

[1] For Heraclitus, see Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 3. Alchemy, or the ancient hypothesis that the elements of matter may be transubstantiated into an ultimate element—thus implying that gold and silver may be produced from the baser metals, and encouraging the search for a universal medicine—was a favourite speculation even in Berkeley's time. Newton believed in alchemy, and devoted much time to an investigation of its processes. Leibnitz, in his youth, was secretary to a society of Rosicrucians at Nuremberg, who practised alchemy. Alchemist speculation was encouraged by Boyle and Locke. And the most advanced science of our day has not abandoned the idea of this scientific transubstantiation.

opinion of Heraclitus, that the death of fire was a birth to air, and the death of air a birth to water. This opinion is also maintained by Sir Isaac Newton. Though it may be questioned, whether what is thought a change be not only a disguise.

149. Fire seems the most elastic and expansive of all bodies. It communicates this quality to moist vapours and dry exhalations, when it heats and agitates their parts, cohering closely with them, overcoming their former mutual attraction, and causing them, instead thereof, reciprocally to repel each other, and fly asunder, with a force proportionable to that wherewith they had cohered.

150. Therefore in air we may conceive two parts; the one more gross, which was raised and carried off from the bodies of this terraqueous mass; the other a fine subtle spirit, by means whereof the former is rendered volatile and elastic. Together they compose a medium whose elasticity is less than that of pure æther, fire, or spirit, in proportion to the quantity of salts, vapours, and heterogeneous particles contained therein. Hence it follows that there is no such thing as the pure simple element of air. It follows also that on the highest mountains air should be more rare in proportion to the vulgar rule, of the spaces being reciprocally as the pressures: and so in fact it is said to have been found by the gentlemen of the French Academy of Sciences.

151. Æther, fire, or spirit, being attracted and clogged by heterogeneous particles, becometh less active; and the particles cohering with those of æther become more active than before. Air therefore is a mass of various particles, abraded and sublimated from wet and dry bodies of all sorts, cohering with particles of æther; the whole permeated by pure æther, or light, or fire: for these words are used promiscuously by ancient philosophers.

152. This Æther or pure invisible Fire[2], the most subtle and

[2] We here pass (sect. 152—230) to a higher link in the Chain—Æther or invisible Fire; which, with Berkeley, connects all things, and is their ultimate physical explanation—being the vital spirit of the universe, corresponding to the animal spirit in man. Fire has always been a mystery. It evades sense-perception; yet it is connected with and seems to animate the phenomena of sense. Hence the supremacy attributed to it by the ancients. Whether fire is merely mechanically resolvable into motion, or motion is to be hyper-mechanically accounted for by animated fire, was an alternative controverted in Berkeley's generation. Bacon, in his *Novum Organum*, had concluded that heat and other sensible effects attributed to fire were due to modifications of motion in the particles of bodies—a doctrine substantially accepted by Boyle and Newton, and in other current physical science. On the other hand, Berkeley's notion of animated, all-pervading fire, as the original *physical* cause or instrument, to which, under Supreme

ic of all bodies, seems to pervade and expand itself through-
the whole universe. If air be the immediate agent or instru-
t in natural things, it is the pure invisible fire that is the first
ral mover or spring from whence the air derives its power
. 139, 149, 151). This mighty agent is everywhere at hand,
y to break forth into action, if not restrained and governed
the greatest wisdom. Being always restless and in motion,
ctuates and enlivens the whole visible mass, is equally fitted
roduce and to destroy, distinguishes the various stages of
re, and keeps up the perpetual round of generations and cor-
ions, pregnant with forms which it constantly sends forth and
rbs. So quick in its motions, so subtle and penetrating in its
re, so extensive in its effects, it seemeth no other than the
etative Soul or Vital Spirit of the World.

53. [3]The animal spirit in man is the instrumental or physical
e both of sense and motion. To suppose sense in the world
ld be gross and unwarranted. But locomotive faculties[4] are
ent in all its parts. The Pythagoreans, Platonists, and Stoics
the world to be an animal; though some of them have chosen
onsider it as a vegetable[5]. However, the phænomena and
ts do plainly shew there is a Spirit that moves, and a Mind or
idence that presides. This Providence, Plutarch[6] saith, was
ght to be in regard to the world what the soul is in regard to

54. The order and course of things, and the experiments we
make, shew there is a Mind that governs and actuates this

all sensible changes are due, and by
the sensible universe is concatenated,
rtly countenanced among his contem-
es by Homberg and Böerhaave. Berke-
d his theory of fire are referred to in
rd Barton's *Analogy of Divine Wisdom*
in, 2nd ed. 1750). 'Fire,' we are there
is the universal fountain of life, order,
tion, stability, beauty of the universe.
ot only in the sun and other heavenly
, but it makes part of every lump of
upon our globe. . . . So quick in its
, so subtle and penetrating in its
, so extensive in its effects, it seemeth
er than the Vegetative Soul and Vital
of the World' (p. 63). See also
ay's?] *Metaphysical Essay* (1748),
, &c.

[3] This and the three next sections, as well as sect. 160, 161, interpolate Berkeley's spiritual philosophy of Power, so prominent in the latter part of *Siris*, and suggest the ancient doctrine of *anima mundi*, apparently to correct any tendency to suppose Fire *per se* the supreme and ultimate Cause.

[4] Cf. sect. 230.

[5] Cf. sect. 166, 172, 273—79, for the theory that the sensible universe is animated, and not the mechanical result of inanimate motive force. The notion of an all-pervading vitality and reason, but not of absolute creation, underlies ancient physical speculation. See Plato, *Timæus*, pp. 29, 30; Diog. Laert. lib. VII.; Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* lib. II. c. 11; also Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. V. c. 20.

mundane system, as the proper real agent and cause; and that the inferior instrumental cause is pure æther, fire, or the substance of light (sect. 29, 37, 136, 149)—which is applied and determined by an Infinite Mind in the macrocosm or universe, with unlimited power, and according to stated rules—as it is in the microcosm with limited power and skill by the human mind. We have no proof, either from experiment or reason, of any other agent or efficient cause than Mind or Spirit[6]. When, therefore, we speak of corporeal agents or corporeal causes, this is to be understood in a different, subordinate, and improper sense.

155. The principles whereof a thing is compounded, the instrument used in its production, and the end for which it was intended, are all in vulgar use termed *causes*, though none of them be, strictly speaking, agent or efficient. There is not any proof that an extended corporeal or mechanical cause doth really and properly act, even motion itself being in truth a passion[7]. Therefore, though we speak of this fiery substance as acting, yet it is to be understood only as a mean or instrument, which indeed is the case of all mechanical causes whatsoever. They are, nevertheless, sometimes termed agents and causes, although they are by no means active in a strict and proper signification. When therefore force, power, virtue, or action is mentioned as subsisting in an extended and corporeal or mechanical being, this is not to be taken in a true, genuine, and real, but only in a gross and popular sense, which sticks in appearances, and doth not analyze things to their first principles. In compliance with established language and the use of the world, we must employ the popular current phrase. But then in regard to truth we ought to distinguish its meaning. It may suffice to have made this declaration once for all, in order to avoid mistakes.

156. The *calidum innatum*, the vital flame, or animal spirit in man, is supposed the cause of all motions in the several parts of his body, whether voluntary or natural. That is, it is accounted the instrument, by means whereof the mind exerts and manifests herself in the motions of the body. In the same sense, may not fire be said to have force, to operate and agitate the whole system

[6] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 26—28.

[7] Cf. sect. 160; also *De Motu*, which teaches that all sensible things are passive, and that animating Spirit is the only proper cause.

of the world, which is held together, and informed by one presiding mind, and animated throughout by one and the same fiery substance—as an instrumental and mechanical agent, not as a primary real efficient?

157. This pure spirit or invisible fire is ever ready to exert and shew itself in its effects (sect. 152), cherishing, heating, fermenting, dissolving, shining, and operating, in various manners, where a subject offers to employ or determine its force. It is present in all parts of the earth and firmament, though perhaps latent and unobserved, till some accident produceth it into act, and renders it visible in its effects.

158. There is no effect in nature, great, marvellous, or terrible, but proceeds from fire, that diffused and active principle, which, at the same time that it shakes the earth and heavens[8], will enter, divide, and dissolve the smallest, closest, and most compacted bodies. In remote cavities of the earth it remains quiet, till perhaps an accidental spark, from the collision of one stone against another, kindles an exhalation that gives birth to an earthquake or tempest which splits mountains or overturns cities. This same fire stands unseen in the focus of a burning glass, till subjects for it to act upon come in its way, when it is found to melt, calcine, or vitrify the hardest bodies.

159. No eye could ever hitherto discern, and no sense perceive, the animal spirit in a human body, otherwise than from its effects. The same may be said of pure fire, or the spirit of the universe, which is perceived only by means of some other bodies, on which it operates, or with which it is joined. What the chemists say of pure acids being never found alone might as well be said of pure fire[9].

160. The mind of man acts by an instrument necessarily. The τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, or mind presiding in the world, acts by an instrument freely. Without instrumental and second causes, there could be no regular course of nature. And without a regular course, nature could never be understood; mankind must always be at a loss, not knowing what to expect, or how to govern themselves,

[8] Cf. Hebrews XII. 26—29.

[9] The same, too, may be said of pure intellect, which always appears in the concrete.

or direct their actions for the obtaining of any end. Therefore in the government of the world physical agents, improperly so called, or mechanical, or second causes, or natural causes, or instruments, are necessary to assist, not the governor, but the governed[10].

161. In the human body the mind orders and moves the limbs: but the animal spirit is supposed the immediate physical cause of their motion. So likewise in the mundane system, a mind presides: but the immediate, mechanical, or instrumental cause, that moves or animates all its parts, is the pure elementary fire or spirit of the world. The more fine and subtle part or spirit is supposed to receive the impressions of the First Mover, and communicate them to the grosser sensible parts of this world. Motion, though in metaphysical rigour and truth a passion or mere effect, yet in physics passeth for an action[11]. And by this action all effects are supposed to be produced. Hence the various communications, determinations, accelerations of motion, constitute the laws of nature.

162. The pure æther or invisible fire contains parts of different kinds, that are impressed with different forces, or subjected to different laws of motion, attraction, repulsion, and expansion, and endued with divers distinct habitudes towards other bodies. These seem to constitute the many various qualities (sect. 37, 40, 44), virtues, flavours, odours, and colours which distinguish natural productions. The different modes of cohesion, attraction, repulsion, and motion appear to be the source from whence specific properties are derived, rather than different shapes or figures. This, as hath been already observed[12], seems confirmed by the experiment of fixed salts operating one way, notwithstanding the difference of their angles. The original particles, productive of odours, flavours, and other properties, as well as of colours, are, one may suspect, all contained and blended together in that universal and original seminary of pure and elementary fire; from

[10] Cf. with this important parenthetical section, *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 60—66, in which Berkeley explains and vindicates the function of physical science, under his theory of the Sensible World.

[11] Cf. sect. 155, and the *De Motu*, passim. With Berkeley motion is a sensible manifestation of animated and invisible fire. The ultimate conception is of a living and teleological, not a blindly moved universe —movement being the expression of a pervading life and meaning. It is taken for granted that Life itself is inexplicable by, and incapable of being formed from, any application of mechanical or chemical laws.

[12] Cf. sect. 131—133.

which they are diversely separated and attracted, by the various subjects of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; which thereby become classed into kinds, and endued with those distinct properties which continue till their several forms, or specific proportions of fire, return into the common mass.

163. As the soul acts immediately on pure fire, so pure fire operates immediately on air; that is, the abrasions of all terrestrial things being rendered volatile and elastic by fire (sect. 149, 150, 152), and at the same time lessening the volatility and expansive force of the fire, whose particles they attract and adhere to (sect. 147), there is produced a new fluid, more volatile than water or earth, and more fixed than fire. Therefore, the virtues and operations imputed to air must be ultimately attributed to fire, as that which imparts activity to air itself.

164. The element of æthereal fire or light seems to comprehend, in a mixed state, the seeds, the natural causes and forms (sect. 43), of all sublunary things. The grosser bodies separate, attract, and repel the several constituent particles of that heterogeneous element; which, being parted from the common mass, make distinct essences, producing and combining together such qualities and properties as are peculiar to the several subjects, and thence often extracted in essential oils or odoriferous waters, from whence they exhale into the open air, and return into their original element.

165. Blue, red, yellow, and other colours, have been discovered by Sir Isaac Newton to depend on the parted rays or particles of light. And, in like manner, a particular odour or flavour seemeth to depend on peculiar particles of light or fire (sect. 40); as appears from heats being necessary to all vegetation whatsoever, and from the extreme minuteness and volatility of those vegetable souls or forms, flying off from the subjects without any sensible diminution of their weight. These particles, blended in one common ocean, should seem to conceal the distinct forms, but, parted and attracted by proper subjects, disclose or produce them. As the particles of light, which, when separated, form distinct colours, being blended are lost in one uniform appearance.

166. [13]Agreeably thereto an æthereal substance or fire was

[13] In sect. 166—187 we have a collection of authorities in Ancient Philosophy—Greek (sect. 166—176) and Oriental (sect. 177—187)—in support of the 'philosophy

supposed by Heraclitus[14] to be the seed of the generation of all things, or that from which all things drew their original. The Stoics[15] also taught that all substance was originally fire, and should return to fire: that an active subtle fire was diffused or expanded throughout the whole universe; the several parts whereof were produced, sustained, and held together, by its force. And it was the opinion of the Pythagoreans, as Laertius informs us, that heat or fire was the principle of life, animating the whole system, and penetrating all the elements (sect. 152, 153). The Platonists, too, as well as the Pythagoreans, held fire to be the immediate natural agent, or animal spirit; to cherish, to warm, to heat, to enlighten, to vegetate, to produce the digestions, circulations, secretions, and organical motions, in all living bodies, vegetable or animal, being effects of that element, which, as it actuates the macrocosm, so it animates the microcosm. In the Timæus[16] of Plato, there is supposed something like a net of fire and rays of fire in a human body. Doth not this seem to mean the animal spirit, flowing, or rather darting, through the nerves?

167. According to the Peripatetics, the form of heaven, or the fiery æthereal substance, contains the form of all inferior beings (sect. 43). It may be said to teem with forms, and impart them to subjects fitted to receive them. The vital force thereof in the Peripatetic sense is vital to all, but diversely received according to the diversity of the subjects. So all colours are virtually contained in the light; but their actual distinctions of blue, red, yellow, and the rest, depend on the difference of the objects which it illustrates. Aristotle, in the book *De Mundo*[17], supposeth a certain fifth essence, an ethereal nature, unchangeable and impassive; and next in order a subtle flaming substance, lighted up or set on fire by that æthereal and Divine nature. He supposeth, indeed, that God is in heaven, but that his power, or a

of fire,'—the doctrine that *æther* or *fire* is the ultimate, informing and unifying, instrumental cause of all natural changes.

[14] Schleiermacher, Bernays, Lassalle, Zeller, and others have cast fresh light on Heraclitus, the most grandly suggestive figure of the Pre-Socratic age, from whom the 'philosophy of fire' descends. The Germans have disinterred the dark philosopher, long *nominis umbra*, in recent histories and monographs. See especially the *Philosophie Herakleitos des Dunkeln* (1858) of Lassalle. In Ferrier's *Lectures on Greek Philosophy* (1866) there is an interesting account of Heraclitus.

[15] Berkeley seems, here and elsewhere, to found much on Diogenes Laertius, and the Pseudo-Plutarch. See Zeller's *Philosophie der Griechen*, for the elemental fire, or world soul, of the Stoics.

[16] Pp. 45, 78.

[17] See cap. 2. The tract *De Mundo* is not now accepted as Aristotle's.

force derived from him, doth actuate and pervade the universe.

168. If we may credit Plutarch[18], Empedocles thought æther or heat to be Jupiter. Æther by the ancient philosophers was used to signify promiscuously sometimes fire and sometimes air. For they distinguish two sorts of air. Plato, in the Timæus[19], speaking of air, saith there are two kinds; the one more fine and subtle, called æther; the other more gross, and replete with vapours. This æther or purer medium seems to have been the air or principle from which all things, according to Anaximenes, derived their birth, and into which they were back again resolved at their death. Hippocrates, in his treatise *De Diæta*[20], speaketh of a fire pure and invisible; and this fire, according to him, is that which, stirring and giving movement to all things, causes them to appear, or, as he styles it, come into evidence, that is, to exist, every one in its time, and according to its destiny.

169. This pure fire, æther, or substance of light was accounted in itself invisible and imperceptible to all our senses, being perceived only by its effects, such as heat, flame, and rarefaction.—To which we may add, that the Moderns pretend farther to have perceived it by weight, inasmuch as the aromatic oils which most abound with fire, as being the most readily and vehemently inflamed, are above all others the heaviest. And by an experiment of Mr. Homberg's, four ounces of regulus of antimony, being calcined by a burning-glass for an hour together, were found to have imbibed and fixed seven drachms of the substance of light.

170. Such is the rarefying and expansive force of this element, as to produce, in an instant of time, the greatest and most stupendous effects: a sufficient proof not only of the power of fire, but also of the wisdom with which it is managed, and withheld from bursting forth every moment to the utter ravage and destruction of all things. And it is very remarkable that this same element, so fierce and destructive, should yet be so variously tempered and applied as to be withal the salutary warmth, the

[18] Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 3.

[19] P. 58.

[20] *Opera*, tom. I. p. 639 (ed. Leips. 1825). An unsuspected relation between Hippocrates (B. C. 460—357) and Heraclitus (cir. B.C. 500—460) was discovered by the learned research of Professor Bernays of Bonn, in his *Heraclitea*, where he traces, with acuteness, a series of quotations from Heraclitus, embedded in the text of the *De Diæta*.

genial, cherishing, and vital flame of all living creatures. It is not therefore to be wondered that Aristotle[21] thought the heat of a living body to be somewhat Divine and celestial, derived from that pure æther to which he supposed the incorporeal Deity (χωριστὸν εἶδος) to be immediately united, or on which he supposed it immediately to act.

171. The Platonists held that intellect resided in soul, and soul in an æthereal vehicle. And that as the soul was a middle nature, reconciling intellect with æther, so æther was another middle nature, which reconciled and connected the soul with grosser bodies (sect. 152, 154). Galen[22] likewise taught that, admitting the soul to be incorporeal, it hath for its immediate tegument or vehicle a body of æther or fire, by the intervention whereof it moveth other bodies, and is mutually affected by them. This interior clothing was supposed to remain upon the soul, not only after death, but after the most perfect purgation, which, in length of time, according to the followers of Plato and Pythagoras, cleansed the soul,

. . . . . 'purumque reliquit
Æthereum sensum, atque aurai simplicis ignem[23].'

This tunicle of the soul, whether it be called pure æther, or luciform vehicle, or animal spirit, seemeth to be that which moves and acts upon the gross organs, as it is determined by the soul from which it immediately receives impression, and in which the moving force truly and properly resides.—Some Moderns have thought fit to deride all that is said of æthereal vehicles, as mere jargon or words without a meaning. But they should have considered that all speech concerning the soul is altogether, or for the most part, metaphorical; and that, agreeably thereunto,

[21] See *De Anim. Gener.* lib. III. c. 11; also *De Anima*, lib. II. c. 4. Aristotle is apt to refer the connexion of soul and body to the universally diffused animal heat; a notion which the Stoics carried further, in identifying God, or the world-soul, with the vital heat. On the physics and cosmology of the Stoics, see Plutarch, *De Stoic.* Rep. 41; Stob. *Ecl. Phys.* I, and Diog. Laert. lib. VII.; also Zeller. Like Heraclitus, they regarded fire as the universal cosmological force, in which the mundane system originated, and in which, after regular development in the ages, it is to dissolve in universal conflagration.

[22] See *Opera*, tom. IV. p. 470 (ed. Bas.) for a passage which partly corresponds to this. Galen (A.D. 130—201) would be the most learned physician and one of the most voluminous writers of antiquity, if all the works attributed to him could be received as genuine. In the treatise on Hippocrates and Plato, and in other Galenic works, may be found passages on Fire not unlike that referred to, but I have not found any exactly corresponding to it. Galen was a great admirer of Hippocrates; for whose doctrine on this subject, cf. sect. 168, 174, 175.

[23] Virgil, *Æneid* VI. 746.

Plato[24] speaketh of the mind or soul, as a driver that guides and governs a chariot, which is, not unfitly, styled αὐγήειδες, a luciform ethereal vehicle or ὄχημα—terms expressive of the purity, lightness, subtlety, and mobility of that fine celestial nature in which the soul immediately resides and operates.

172. It was a tenet of the Stoics that the world was an animal, and that Providence answered to the reasonable soul in man. But then the Providence or mind was supposed by them to be immediately resident or present in fire, to dwell therein, and to act thereby. Briefly, they conceived God to be an intellectual and fiery spirit, πνεῦμα νοερὸν καὶ πυρώδες. Therefore, though they looked on fire (sect. 166) as the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν or governing principle of the world, yet it was not simply fire, but animated with a mind.

173. Such are the bright and lively signatures of a Divine Mind, operating and displaying itself in fire and light throughout the world, that, as Aristotle observes, in his book *De Mundo*[25], all things seem full of divinities, whose apparitions on all sides strike and dazzle our eyes. And it must be owned the chief philosophers and wise men of antiquity, how much soever they attributed to second causes and the force of fire, yet they supposed a Mind or Intellect always resident therein, active or provident, restraining its force, and directing its operations.

174. Thus Hippocrates, in his treatise *De Diæta*[26], speaks of a strong but invisible fire (sect. 168), that rules all things without noise. Herein, saith he, reside soul, understanding, prudence, growth, motion, diminution, change, sleep, and waking. This is what governs all things, and is never in repose. And the same author, in his tract *De Carnibus*[27], after a serious preface, setting forth that he is about to declare his own opinion, expresseth it in these terms:—'That which we call heat, θερμὸν, appears to me something immortal, which understands all things, which sees and knows both what is present and what is to come.'

175. This same heat is also what Hippocrates calls nature, the author of life and death, good and evil. It is farther to be noted

[24] *Phædrus*, p. 246. Cf. *Alcibiron*, Dial. VII. 16.

[25] Cap. 6.

[26] *Opera*, tom. I. p. 639.

[27] The original is as follows:—Δοκέει δέ μοι ὃ καλεόμενον θερμὸν, ἀθάνατόν τε εἶναι, καὶ νοεῖν πάντα, καὶ ὁρῆν καὶ ἀκούειν καὶ εἰδέναι πάντα καὶ τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα ἔσεσθαι. *Opera*, tom. I. p. 425.

of this heat, that he maketh it the object of no sense. It is that occult universal nature, and inward invisible force, which actuates and animates the whole world, and was worshipped by the ancients under the name of Saturn; which Vossius judges not improbably to be derived from the Hebrew word *satar*, to lie hidden or concealed. And what hath been delivered by Hippocrates agrees with the notions of other philosophers: Heraclitus (sect. 157), for instance, who held fire to be the principle and cause of the generation of all things, did not mean thereby an inanimate element, but, as he termed it, πῦρ ἀειζώον, an everlasting fire[28].

176. Theophrastus, in his book *De Igne*[29], distinguisheth between heat and fire. The first he considers as a principle or cause; not that which appeareth to sense as a passion or accident existing in a subject, and which is in truth the effect of that unseen principle. And it is remarkable that he refers the treating of this invisible fire or heat to the investigation of the First Causes. Fire, the principle, is neither generated nor destroyed, is everywhere and always present (sect. 157); while its effects in different times and places shew themselves more or less, and are very various, soft and cherishing, or violent and destructive, terrible or agreeable, conveying good and evil, growth and decay, life and death, throughout the mundane system.

177. [30] It is allowed by all that the Greeks derived much of their philosophy from the Eastern nations. And Heraclitus is thought by some to have drawn his principles from Orpheus, as Orpheus did from the Egyptians; or, as others write, he had been auditor of Hippasus, a Pythagorean, who held the same notion of fire, and might have derived it from Egypt by his master Pythagoras, who had travelled into Egypt, and been instructed by the sages of that nation. One of whose tenets it was, that fire was the principle of all action; which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Stoics, that the whole of things is administered by a fiery intellectual spirit. In the Asclepian Dialogue[31], we find this notion, that all parts of

[28] See Ritter and Preller, No. 34; Heracl. ap. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* V. p. 599. Matter was spiritualized by the Fire of Heraclitus, called ψυχή by Aristotle (*De Anima*, lib. I. c. 2.)

[29] Theophrastus dwells on the distinction between θερμὸν and πῦρ in various parts of this treatise.

[30] In sect. 177—187 Berkeley turns to the East.

[31] One of the famous Hermic Books, but not by Hermes, Egyptian in doctrine, while written in Greek, and entitled, Ὁ τέλειος λόγος.

the world vegetate by a fine subtle æther, which acts as an engine or instrument, subject to the will of the supreme God.

178. As the Platonists held intellect to be lodged in soul, and soul in æther (sect. 171); so it passeth for a doctrine of Trismegistus in the Pimander[32], that mind is clothed by soul, and soul by spirit. Therefore, as the animal spirit of man, being subtle and luminous, is the immediate tegument of the human soul, or that wherein and whereby she acts; even so the spirit of the world, that active fiery ethereal substance of light, that permeates and animates the whole system, is supposed to clothe the soul, which clothes the mind of the universe.

179. The Magi likewise said of God, that he had light for his body and truth for his soul. And in the Chaldaic oracles, all things are supposed to be governed by a πῦρ νοερὸν, or intellectual fire. And in the same oracles, the creative mind is said to be clothed with fire, ἐσσάμενος πυρὶ πῦρ, which oriental reduplication of the word fire seems to imply the extreme purity and force thereof. Thus also in the Psalms, 'Thou art clothed with light as with a garment.' Where the word rendered light might have been rendered fire; the Hebrew letters being the same with those in the word which signifies fire, all the difference being in the pointing, which is justly counted a late invention. That other Scripture sentence is remarkable: 'Who maketh his ministers a flaming fire:' which might, perhaps, be rendered more agreeably to the context, as well as consistently with the Hebrew, after this manner: 'Who maketh flaming fire his ministers:' and the whole might run thus: 'Who maketh the winds his messengers, and flaming fire his ministers.'

180. A notion of something Divine in fire, animating the whole world, and ordering its several parts, was a tenet of very general extent (sect. 156, 157, 163, 166, 167, 168, 170, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177, &c.), being embraced in the most distant times and places, even among the Chinese themselves; who make *tien*[33], æther, or heaven, the sovereign principle or cause of all things, and teach that the celestial virtue, by them called *li*, when joined to a corporeal substance, doth fashion, distinguish, and specificate all natu-

[32] The *Pœmander*, the most celebrated of the Hermic writings. Æther was personified in Hermes.

[33] So, too, the Celtic festival of *Beltien*, originally connected with fire-worship.

ral beings. This *li* of the Chinese seems to answer the forms of the Peripatetics, and both bear analogy to the foregoing philosophy of fire.

181. The heaven is supposed pregnant with virtues and forms, which constitute and discriminate the various species of things. And we have more than once observed that, as the light, fire, or celestial æther, being parted by refracting or reflecting bodies, produceth variety of colours; even so, that same apparently uniform substance, being parted and secreted by the attracting and repelling powers of the divers secretory ducts of plants and animals, that is, by natural chemistry, produceth or imparteth the various specific properties of natural bodies. Whence the tastes, and odours, and medicinal virtues so various in vegetables.

182. The *tien* is considered and adored by the learned Chinese as living and intelligent æther, the πῦρ νοερὸν of the Chaldeans and the Stoics. And the worship of things celestial, the sun and stars, among the Eastern nations less remote, was on account of their fiery nature, their heat and light, and the influence thereof. Upon these accounts, the sun was looked on by the Greek theologers as the spirit of the world, and the power of the world[34]. The cleansing quality, the light and heat of fire, are natural symbols of purity, knowledge, and power, or, if I may so say, the things themselves, so far as they are perceptible to our senses, or in the same sense as motion is said to be action. Accordingly, we find a religious regard was paid to fire, both by Greeks and Romans, and indeed by most, if not all, the nations of the world.

183. The worship of Vesta at Rome was, in truth, the worship of fire.

'Nec tu aliud Vestam quam vivam intellige flammam,'

saith Ovid in his Fasti[35]. And as in old Rome the eternal fire was religiously kept by virgins, so in Greece, particularly at Delphi and Athens, it was kept by widows. It is well known that Vulcan or fire was worshipped with great distinction by the Egyptians. The Zabii or Sabeans are also known to have been worshippers of fire. It appears too, from the Chaldean oracles, that fire was regarded as Divine by the sages of that nation. And it is supposed

[34] See Professor Max Müller, on the original elements of mythology, in the *Oxford Essays* (1856). The development of Sun-worship is a curious subject, in connection with comparative theology.

[35] Lib. VI. 291.

that Ur of the Chaldeans was so called from the Hebrew word signifying fire, because fire was publicly worshipped in that city. That a religious worship was paid to fire by the ancient Persians and their Magi is attested by all antiquity. And the sect of Persees, or old Gentiles, of whom there are considerable remains at this day both in the Mogul's country and in Persia, doth testify the same.

184. It doth not seem that their prostrations before the perpetual fires, preserved with great care in their Pyreia, or fire temples, were merely a civil respect, as Dr. Hyde[36] would have it thought. Although he brings good proof that they do not invoke the fire on their altars, or pray to it, or call it God: and that they acknowledge a supreme invisible Deity. Civil respects are paid to things as related to civil power: but such relation doth not appear in the present case. It should seem, therefore, that they worship God as present in the fire, which they worship or reverence not ultimately or for itself, but relatively to the supreme Being. Which it is not unlikely was elsewhere the case at first, though the practice of men, especially of the vulgar, might in length of time degenerate from the original institution, and rest in the object of sense.

185. Doctor Hyde[36], in his History of the Religion of the Ancient Persians, would have it thought that they borrowed the use and reverence of perpetual fires, from the Jewish practice prescribed in the Levitical law of keeping a perpetual fire burning on the altar. Whether that was the case or not, thus much one may venture to say: it seems probable that, whatever was the original of this custom among the Persians, the like customs among the Greeks and Romans were derived from the same source.

186. It must be owned there are many passages in Holy Scripture (sect. 179) that would make one think the supreme Being was in a peculiar manner present and manifest in the element of fire. Not to insist that God is more than once said to be a consuming fire, which might be understood in a metaphorical sense, the Divine apparitions were by fire, in the bush, at Mount Sinai, on the tabernacle, in the cloven tongues. God is represented in the inspired writings, as descending in fire, as attended by fire, or with fire going before him. Celestial things, as angels,

[36] See his *Veterum Persarum et Medorum Religionis Historia*, c. 6, 8. Dr. Hyde (1636—1703) was Professor of Hebrew in Oxford, and Canon of Christ Church.

chariots, and such-like phænomena, are invested with fire, light, and splendour. Ezekiel in his visions beheld fire and brightness, lamps, burning coals of fire, and flashes of lightning. In a vision of Daniel, the throne of God appeared like a fiery flame, and his wheels like burning fire. Also a fiery flame issued and came forth from before him.

187. At the transfiguration, the apostles saw our Saviour's face shining as the sun, and his raiment white as light, also a lucid cloud, or body of light, out of which the voice came; which visible light and splendour were, not many centuries ago, maintained by the Greek church to have been Divine, and uncreated, and the very glory of God; as may be seen in the History wrote by the Emperor John Cantacuzene[37]. And of late years Bishop Patrick gives it as his opinion, that in the beginning of the world the Shechinah, or Divine presence, which was then frequent and ordinary, appeared by light or fire. In commenting on that passage, where Cain is said to have gone out from the presence of the Lord, the Bishop observes, that if Cain after this turned a downright idolater, as many think, it is very likely he introduced the worship of the sun, as the best resemblance he could find of the glory of the Lord, which was wont to appear in a flaming light. It would be endless to enumerate all the passages of Holy Scripture, which confirm and illustrate this notion, or represent the Deity as appearing and operating by fire; the misconstruction of which might possibly have misled the Gnostics, Basilidians, and other ancient heretics into an opinion that Jesus Christ was the visible corporeal sun.

188. [38]We have seen that in the most remote ages and countries, the vulgar as well as the learned, the institutions of lawgivers as well as the reasonings of philosophers have ever considered the element of fire in a peculiar light, and treated it with more than common regard, as if it were something of a very singular and extraordinary nature. Nor are there wanting authors of principal account among the Moderns who entertain like notions

[37] Cantacuzini *Historiarum*, lib. II. c. 39. 40. John V, Byzantine emperor (Joannes Cantacuzenus), born about 1292. In 1354 he abdicated, and betook himself to a monastic life, when he wrote a History of the Eastern Empire during the former part of the fourteenth century. He ranks as one of the Byzantine historians.

[38] Sect. 188—205 refer chiefly to Modern authorities in support of the 'philosophy of fire.'

concerning fire, especially among those who are most conversant in that element, and should seem best acquainted with it.

189. Mr. Homberg[39], the famous modern chemist, who brought that art to so great perfection, holds the substance of light or fire to be the true chemic principle sulphur (sect. 129), and to extend itself throughout the whole universe. It is his opinion that this is the only active principle. That mixed with various things it formeth several sorts of natural productions: with salts making oil, with earth bitumen, with mercury metal. That this principle of sulphur, fire, or the substance of light, is in itself imperceptible, and only becomes sensible as it is joined with some other principle, which serves as a vehicle for it. That, although it be the most active of all things, yet it is at the same time the most firm bond and cement to combine and hold the principles together, and give form to the mixed bodies. And that in the analysis of bodies it is always lost, escaping the skill of the artist, and passing through the closest vessels.

190. Boerhaave[40], Nieuwentyt[41], and divers other moderns[42] are in the same way of thinking. They with the ancients distinguish a pure elementary invisible fire from the culinary, or that which appears in ignited bodies (sect. 163, 166). This last they will not allow to be pure fire. The pure fire is to be discerned by its effects alone; such as heat, dilatation of all solid bodies, and rarefaction of fluids, the segregating heterogeneous bodies, and congregating those that are homogeneous. That therefore which smokes and flames is not pure fire, but that which is collected in the focus of a [43concave] mirror or burning-glass. This fire seems

[39] See Homberg's *Essais du Souffre Principe*, in the Memoirs of the Academy (1705), where he maintains that sulphur, when assumed to be the primary ingredient in all bodies, is fire, and thus that fire is coeval and coextensive with body. When chemists of the school which Berkeley partly followed speak of fire as the elementary substance, they generally mean (as far as meaning can be found in their words) pure elementary Sulphur.

[40] In his *Elementa Chemiæ*, Böerhaave represents fire to be the instrumental cause of all motion—its own movement or activity being referred to a metaphysical cause.

[41] Bernard Nieuwentyt (1654—1718), a Dutch physician, mathematician, and writer on natural theology. His criticism of the differential calculus called forth John Bernoulli and Leibnitz in defence. In natural theology he curiously anticipates Paley's well-known illustration of the watch; see the English translation of Nieuwentyt's *Religious Philosopher* (1730), Preface, pp. 46—49.

[42] Thus, S. Gravesande argues that fire is the catholic element in matter, obtainable from all bodies by friction, which puts their latent fire in motion (*Element. Phys.* I. 2. c. 1); and Lemery, the younger, asserts the ingenerable nature of fire, arguing that it is equally diffused through space, and the universal element in bodies (*Mém. de l'Acad.*, 1713).

[43] Not in the early editions.

the source of all the operations in nature: without it nothing either vegetates or putrefies, lives or moves or ferments, is dissolved or compounded or altered, throughout this whole natural world in which we subsist. Were it not for this, the whole would be one great stupid inanimate mass. But this active element is supposed to be everywhere, and always present, imparting different degrees of life, heat, and motion to the various animals, vegetables, and other natural productions, as well as to the elements themselves wherein they are produced and nourished.

191. As water acts upon salt, or aquafortis upon iron, so fire dissolves all other bodies. Fire, air, and water are all three menstruums: but the two last seem to derive all their force and activity from the first (sect. 149). And indeed there seems to be, originally or ultimately, but one menstruum in nature, to which all other menstruums may be reduced. Acid salts are a menstruum, but their force and distinct powers are from sulphur. Considered as pure, or in themselves, they are all of the same nature. But, as obtained by distillation, they are constantly joined with some sulphur, which characterizeth and cannot be separated from them. This is the doctrine of Monsieur Homberg. But what is it that characterizeth or differenceth the sulphurs themselves? If sulphur be the substance of light, as that author will have it, whence is it that animal, vegetable, and metallic sulphurs impart different qualities to the same acid salt? Can this be explained upon Homberg's principles? And are we not obliged to suppose that light, separated by the attracting and repelling powers in the strainers, ducts, and pores of those bodies, doth form several distinct kinds of sulphur, all which, before such separation, were lost and blended together, in one common mass of light or fire, seemingly homogeneous?

192. In the analysis of inflammable bodies, the fire or sulphur is lost, and the diminution of weight sheweth the loss (sect. 169). Oil is resolved into water, earth, and salt, none of which is inflammable. But the fire or *vinculum* which connected those things, and gave the form of oil, escapes from the artist. It disappears but is not destroyed. Light or fire imprisoned made part of the compound, gave union to the other parts, and form to the whole. But, having escaped, it mingles with the general ocean of æther, till, being again parted and attracted, it enters

specificates some new subject of the animal, vegetable, or eral kingdom. Fire, therefore, in the sense of philosophers, ways fire, though not always flame.

)3. Solar fire or light, in calcining certain bodies, is observed dd to their weight[44]. There is therefore no doubt but light be fixed, and enter the composition of a body. And though ıould lie latent for a long time, yet, being set free from its)n, it shall still shew itself to be fire. Lead, tin, or regulus ıtimony, being exposed to the fire of a burning-glass, though lose much in smoke and steam, are nevertheless found to onsiderably increased in weight, which proves the introduction ight or fire into their pores. It is also observed that urine uceth no phosphorus unless it be long exposed to the solar . From all which it may be concluded, that bodies attract fix the light; whence it should seem, as some have observed, fire without burning is an ingredient in many things, as water out wetting.

)4. Of this there cannot be a better proof than the experiment Ionsieur Homberg, who made gold of mercury by introducing into its pores, but at such trouble and expense, that I sup- nobody will try the experiment for profit. By this junction ight and mercury, both bodies became fixed, and produced ird different from either, to wit, real gold. For the truth vhich fact, I refer to the Memoirs of the French Academy :iences[45]. From the foregoing experiment it appears that gold ıly a mass of mercury penetrated and cemented by the sub- ce of light, the particles of those bodies attracting and fixing other. This seems to have been not altogether unknown)rmer philosophers; Marcilius Ficinus[46], the Platonist, in his mentary on the first book of the second Ennead of Plotinus,

Cf. sect. 169. This was Boyle's expla-, long ago exploded, like other chemi- planations and 'experiments' accepted se sections.

lee Homberg's *Mémoire* (1700)—'Sur issolvans du Mercure.' In Barton's gy this passage in *Siris* is referred to.

Marcilius Ficinus (1433—99), the s Florentine physician and philosopher, ed the revival of Platonism and Neo- ism. He translated or commented on Plotinus, Jamblicus, and Proclus. Fici- ith his affinity for Neoplatonism, and for Hermic and Oriental lore, his endeavours to harmonize Plato and Aristotle, and his aspirations to reunion with God through a contemplative life, seems to have attracted Berkeley strongly in his latter days. Berkeley appears to have studied Plotinus and the other Neoplatonists in connexion with Ficinus, who may have first led him to recognise the intellectual community of some of their doctrines with his own early philosophy. It was perhaps from the eclecticism of Ficinus that he was induced sometimes to mix up the opinions of earlier and later philosophers with those of Plato.

and others likewise before him, regarding mercury as the mother, and sulphur as the father of metals; and Plato himself, in his Timæus describing gold to be a dense fluid with a shining yellow light, which well suits a composition of light and mercury[47].

195. Fire or light mixeth with all bodies (sect. 157), even with water; witness the flashing lights in the sea, whose waves seem frequently all on fire. Its operations are various according to its kind, quantity, and degree of vehemence. One degree keeps water fluid, and another turns it into elastic air (sect. 149). And air itself seems to be nothing else but vapours and exhalations, rendered elastic by fire. Nothing flames but oil; and sulphur with water, salt, and earth compose oil, which sulphur is fire: therefore fire enclosed attracts fire, and causeth the bodies whose composition it enters to burn and blaze.

196. Fire collected in the focus of a glass operates in vacuo, and therefore is thought not to need air to support it. Calx of lead hath gone off with an explosion in vacuo, which Nieuwentyt and others take for a proof that fire can burn without air. But Mr. Hales[48] attributes this effect to air enclosed in the red lead, and perhaps too in the receiver, which cannot be perfectly exhausted. When common lead is put into the fire in order to make red lead, a greater weight of this comes out than was put in of common lead. Therefore the red lead should seem impregnated with fire. Mr. Hales thinks it is with air. The vast expansion of compound aqua fortis, Mr. Nieuwentyt will have to proceed from fire alone. Mr. Hales contends that air must necessarily co-operate. Though, by Nieuwentyt's experiment, it should seem the phosphorus burns equally with and without air.

197. Perhaps they who hold the opposite sides in this question may be reconciled by observing that air is in reality nothing more than particles of wet and dry bodies volatilized and rendered elastic by fire (sect. 147, 150, 151). Whatever, therefore, is done by air must be ascribed to fire; which fire is a subtle invisible

[47] This curious section, with its authorities in support of Alchemy—the speculation attributed originally to Hermes Trismegistus, and which seemed to culminate in Paracelsus and Marcilius Ficinus, Lully and Van Helmont—is not at variance with facts and speculations in recent chemistry, in its tendency to unity. Cf. sect. 69, 71, on mercury as a supposed Catholicon; and sect. 148, on the transmutation of elements. For Plato on gold, see *Timæus*, p. 59.

[48] *Statical Essays*, vol. I. pp. 278—80. This is Dr. Stephen Hales (1677—1761), who afterwards wrote on Tar-water, and to whom Berkeley addressed the *Letter* on its virtues in cattle plague, placed in this edition among his Miscellaneous Works, vol. III. pp. 489—90.

thing, whose operation is not to be discerned but by means of some grosser body, which serves not for a pabulum to nourish the fire, but for a vehicle to arrest and bring it into view. Which seems the sole use of oil, air, or any other thing that vulgarly passeth for a pabulum or food of that element.

198. To explain this matter more clearly, it is to be observed that fire, in order to become sensible, must have some object to act upon. This, being penetrated and agitated by fire, affects us with light, heat, or some other sensible alteration. And this subject so wrought upon may be called culinary fire. In the focus of a burning-glass exposed to the sun, there is real actual fire; though not discerned by the sense till it hath somewhat to work on, and can shew itself in its effects, heating, flaming, melting, and the like. Every ignited body is, in the foregoing sense, culinary fire. But it will not therefore follow that it is convertible into pure elementary fire. This, for aught that appears, may be ingenerable and incorruptible by the course of nature[49]. It may be fixed and imprisoned in a compound (sect. 169, 192, 193), and yet retain its nature, though lost to sense, and though it return into the invisible elementary mass, upon the analysis of the compounded body: as is manifest in the solution of stone lime by water.

199. It should seem, therefore, that what is said of air's being the pabulum of fire, or being converted into fire, ought to be understood only in this sense; to wit, that air, being less gross than other bodies, is of a middle nature, and therefore more fit to receive the impressions of a fine æthereal fire (sect. 163), and impart them to other things. According to the ancients, soul serveth for a vehicle to intellect (sect. 178), and light or fire for a vehicle to the soul; and, in like manner, air may be supposed a vehicle to fire, fixing it in some degree, and communicating its effects to other bodies.

200. The pure invisible fire or æther doth permeate all bodies, even the hardest and most solid, as the diamond. This alone, therefore, cannot, as some learned men have supposed, be the cause of muscular motion, by a mere impulse of the nerves communicated from the brain to the membranes of the muscles, and thereby to the enclosed æther, whose expansive motion, being by that means increased, is thought to swell the muscles and cause a

[49] As held by the younger Lemery, to whom Berkeley afterwards refers (sect. 244).

contraction of the fleshy fibres. This, it should seem, the pure æther cannot do immediately and of itself, because, supposing its expansive motion to be increased, it must still pass through the membranes, and consequently not swell them, inasmuch as æther is supposed freely to pervade the most solid bodies. It should seem, therefore, that this effect must be owing, not to pure æther, but to æther in some part fixed and arrested by the particles of air.

201. Although this æther be extremely elastic, yet, as it is sometimes found by experience to be attracted, imprisoned, and retained in gross bodies (sect. 169), so we may suppose it to be attracted, and its expansive force diminished, though it should not be quite fixed, by the loose particles of air, which combining and cohering therewith may bring it down, and qualify it for intercourse with grosser things. Pure fire may be said to animate air, and air other things. Pure fire is invisible; therefore flame is not pure fire. Air is necessary both to life and flame. And it is found by experiment that air loseth in the lungs the power of feeding flame. Hence it is concluded that the same thing in air contributes both to life and flame. Vital flame survives culinary flame in vacuo: therefore it requires less of that thing to sustain it.

202. What this may be, whether some certain proportion, or some peculiar parts, of æther, is not easy to say. But thus much seems plain, that whatever is ascribed to acid may be also ascribed to fire or æther. The particles of æther fly asunder with the greatest force: therefore, agreeably to Sir Isaac Newton's doctrine, when united they must attract each other with the greatest force. Therefore they constitute the acid. For, whatsoever strongly attracts and is attracted, may be called an acid, as Sir Isaac Newton informs us in his tract *De Acido*. Hence it should seem that the sulphur of Homberg, and the acid of Sir Isaac are at bottom one and the same thing, to wit, pure fire or æther.

203. The vital flame or æthereal spirit, being attracted and imprisoned in grosser bodies, seemeth to be set free and carried off by the superior attraction of a subtle and pure flame. Hence, perhaps, it is, that lightning kills animals, and turns spirituous liquors vapid in an instant.

204. Hippocrates, in his book concerning the Heart[50], observeth

[50] *Opera*, tom. I. p. 490.

that the soul of man is not nourished by meats and drinks from the lower belly, but by a pure and luminous substance darting its rays, and distributing a non-natural nourishment, as he terms it, in like manner as that from the intestines is distributed to all parts of the body. This luminous non-natural nourishment, though it be secreted from the blood, is expressly said not to come from the lower belly. It is plain, therefore, he thought it came into the blood, either by respiration, or by attraction through the pores. And it must be acknowledged that somewhat igneous or æthereal, brought by the air into the blood, seems to nourish, though not the soul itself, yet the interior tunicle of the soul, the *auraï simplicis ignem*.

205. That there is really such a thing as vital flame, actually kindled, nourished, and extinguished, like common flame, and by the same means, is an opinion of some moderns, particularly of Dr. Willis[51] in his tract *De Sanguinis Accensione*: that it requires constant eventilation, through the trachæa and pores of the body for the discharge of a fuliginous and excrementitious vapour; and that this vital flame, being extremely subtle, might not be seen any more than shining flies or *ignes fatui* by daylight. And yet it hath sometimes become visible on divers persons, of which there are undoubted instances. This is Dr. Willis's notion: and perhaps there may be some truth in this, if it be so understood as that light or fire might indeed constitute the animal spirit or immediate vehicle of the soul.

206. [52]There have not been wanting those, who, not content to suppose Light the most pure and refined of all corporeal beings, have gone farther, and bestowed upon it some attributes of a yet higher nature. Julianus, the Platonic philosopher, as cited by Ficinus, saith it was a doctrine in the theology of the Phœnicians, that there is diffused throughout the universe a pellucid and shining nature, pure and impassive, the act of a pure intelligence. And Ficinus himself undertakes to prove that light is incorporeal by several arguments: because it enlightens and fills a great space in

[51] Thomas Willis (1621—1675), called by Anthony Wood 'the most celebrated physician of his time,' author of the *De Anima Brutorum*. There are several editions of his collected works. The tract here referred to is entitled *De Sanguinis Incalescentia, sive Accensione*.

[52] Light or Fire is considered in yet other aspects in sect. 206—211—in particular in regard to its alleged incorporeality, which Berkeley denies.

an instant, and without opposition: because several lights meet without resisting each other: because light cannot be defiled by filth of any kind: because the solar light is not fixed in any subject: lastly, because it contracts and expands itself so easily without collision, condensation, rarefaction, or delay, throughout the vastest space. These reasons are given by Ficinus, in his comment on the first book[53] of the second Ennead of Plotinus.

207. But it is now well known that light moves, and that its motion is not instantaneous: that it is capable of condensation, rarefaction, and collision: that it can be mixed with other bodies, enter their composition, and increase their weight (sect. 169, 192, 193). All which seems sufficiently to overthrow those arguments of Ficinus, and shew light to be corporeal. There appears indeed some difficulty at first sight, about the non-resistance of rays or particles of light occurring one to another, in all possible directions or from all points. Particularly, if we suppose the hollow surface of a large sphere studded with eyes looking inwards one at another, it may perhaps seem hard to conceive how distinct rays from every eye should arrive at every other eye without justling, repelling, and confounding each other.

208. But these difficulties may be got over by considering, in the first place, that visible points are not mathematical points[54], and consequently that we are not to suppose every point of space a radiating point. Secondly, by granting that many rays do resist and intercept each other, notwithstanding which the act of vision may be performed. Since as every point of the object is not seen, so it is not necessary that rays from every such point arrive at the eye. We often see an object, though more dimly, when many rays are intercepted by a gross medium.

209. Besides, we may suppose the particles of light to be indefinitely small, that is, as small as we please, and their aggregate to bear as small a proportion to the void as we please, there being nothing in this that contradicts the phænomena. And there needs nothing more, in order to conceive the possibility of rays passing from and to all visible points, although they be not incorporeal. Suppose a hundred ports placed round a circular sea, and ships sailing from each port to every other; the larger the sea, and the smaller the vessels are supposed, the less danger will there be of

[53] Cap. 3.

[54] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 150—152.

their striking against each other. But, as there is by hypothesis no limited proportion between the sea and the ships, the void and solid particles of light, so there is no difficulty that can oblige us to conclude the sun's light incorporeal from its free passage; especially when there are so many clear proofs of the contrary. As for the difficulty, therefore, attending the supposition of a sphere studded with eyes looking at each other, this is removed only by supposing the particles of light exceeding small relatively to the empty spaces.

210. Plotinus[55] supposeth that from the sun's light, which is corporeal, there springs forth another equivocal light which is incorporeal, and as it were the brightness of the former. Marcilius Ficinus[56] also, observing it to be a doctrine in the *Timæus* of Plato, that there is an occult fire or spirit diffused throughout the universe, intimates that this same occult invisible fire or light is, as it were, the sight of the mundane soul. And Plotinus in his fourth Ennead[56] sheweth it to be his opinion that the world seeth itself and all its parts. The Platonic philosophers do wonderfully refine upon light, and soar very high: from coal to flame; from flame to light; from this visible light to the occult light of the celestial or mundane soul, which they supposed to pervade and agitate the substance of the universe by its vigorous and expansive motion.

211. If we may believe Diogenes Laertius[57], the Pythagorean philosophers thought there was a certain pure heat or fire, which had somewhat Divine in it, by the participation whereof men became allied to the gods. And according to the Platonist, heaven is not defined so much by its local situation as by its purity. The purest and most excellent fire, that is heaven, saith Ficinus[58]. And again, the hidden fire that everywhere exerts itself, he calls celestial. He represents fire as most powerful and active, dividing all things, abhorring all composition or mixture with other bodies. And, as soon as it gets free, relapsing instantly into the common mass of celestial fire, which is everywhere present and latent.

212. [59]This is the general source of life, spirit, and strength,

[55] See *Second Ennead*, lib. I. c. 7, in the Commentary of Ficinus; also *Timæus*, pp. 45, 55—56.
[56] Lib. V. c. 8.
[57] Diog. Laert. lib. VIII p. 585.
[58] See Ficinus on *Second Ennead*, lib. I.
[59] Sect. 212—219 sum up the doctrine of *Siris* regarding the relations of the [illegible] or invisible Fire to animal and [illegible] life.

and therefore of health to all animals, who constantly receive its illapses clothed in air, through the lungs and pores of the body. The same spirit, imprisoned in food and medicines, is conveyed into the stomach, the bowels, the lacteals, circulated and secreted by the several ducts, and distributed throughout the system (sect. 37, 42, 44). Plato, in his *Timæus*[60], enumerating the ignited juices, names wine in the first place, and tar in the second. But wine is pressed from the grape, and fermented by human industry. Therefore of all ignited juices purely natural, tar or resin must in his account be esteemed the first.

213. The vivifying luminous æther exists in all places, even the darkest caverns; as is evident from hence, that many animals see in those dark places, and that fire may be kindled in them by the collision or attrition of bodies. It is also known that certain persons have fits of seeing in the dark. Tiberius was said[61] to have had this faculty or distemper. I myself knew an ingenious man who had experienced it several times in himself. And Dr. Willis, in his tract *De Sanguinis Accensione*, mentions another of his own knowledge. This luminous æther or spirit is therefore said by Virgil[62] to nourish or cherish the innermost earth, as well as the heavens and celestial bodies.

> 'Principio cœlum ac terras, camposque liquentes,
> Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra
> Spiritus intus alit.'

214. The principles of motion and vegetation in living bodies seem to be delibations from the invisible fire or spirit of the universe (sect. 43, 157, 164, 171): which though present to all things, is not nevertheless one way received by all; but variously imbibed, attracted, and secreted, by the fine capillaries, and exquisite strainers in the bodies of plants and animals, whereby it becomes mixed and detained in their juices.

215. It hath been thought by some observers of nature that the fine glandular vessels admit from the common mass of the blood only such juices as are homogeneous to those with which they were originally imbued. How they came to be so imbued doth not appear. But thus much is plain; that fine tubes attract fluids, that the glands are fine tubes, and that they attract very different juices from the common mass. The same holds also

[60] P. 60. [61] *Suetonius*, cap. 68. [62] *Æneid*, VI. 724—26.

with regard to the capillary vessels of vegetables (sect. 30, 31, 33, 35), it being evident that, through the fine strainers in the leaves and all over the body of the plant, there be juices or fluids of a particular kind drawn in, and separated from the common mass of air and light. And that the most elaborate spirit, whereon the character or distinguishing virtue and properties of the plant depend, is of a luminous (sect. 37, 43) and volatile nature, being lost or escaping into air or æther, from essential oils and odoriferous waters, without any sensible diminution of them.

216. As different kinds of secreted light or fire produce different essences, virtues, or specific properties, so also different degrees of heat produce different effects. Thus, one degree of heat keeps the blood from coagulating, and another degree coagulates the blood. Thus, a more violent fire hath been observed to set free and carry off that very light, which a more moderate fire had introduced and fixed in the calcined regulus of antimony. In like manner, one kind or quantity of this æthereal fiery spirit may be congenial and friendly to the spirits of a man, while another may be noxious.

217. [63]And experience sheweth this to be true. For, the fermented spirit of wine or other liquors produceth irregular motions, and subsequent depressions in the animal spirits. Whereas the luminous spirit lodged and detained in the native balsam of pines and firs is of a nature so mild, and benign, and proportioned to the human constitution, as to warm without heating, to cheer but not inebriate[64], and to produce a calm and steady joy like the effect of good news, without that sinking of spirits which is a subsequent effect of all fermented cordials. I may add, without all other inconvenience, except that it may like any other medicine be taken in too great a quantity for [[65]a nice] stomach. In which case it may be right to lessen the dose, or to take it only once in the four and twenty hours, empty, going to bed (when it is found to be least offensive), or even to suspend the taking

[63] The train of thought here suggests a return (sect. 217—219) to the medical and other properties of tar-water.

[64] So Cowper—

. . . . . 'The cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each;
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.'
The Task, B. IV. 39.

The coincidence can hardly be accidental. Cowper, born in 1731, was grown up when *Siris* was the rage—at once for its therapeutic novelties, and the beauty of its style.

[65] 'too nice a'—in first edition.

of it for a time, till nature shall seem to crave it, and rejoice in its benign and comfortable spirit.

218. Tar-water, serving as a vehicle to this spirit, is both diuretic and diaphoretic, but seems to work its principal effect by assisting the *vis vitæ*, as an alterative and cordial, enabling nature, by an accession of congenial spirit, to assimilate that which could not be assimilated by her proper force, and so to subdue the *fomes morbi*. And this should seem in most cases the best and safest course. Great evacuations weaken nature as well as the disease. And it is to be feared that they who use salivations and copious bleedings, may, though they should recover of the distemper, in their whole life be never able to recover of the remedies.

219. It is true, indeed, that in chronical cases there is need of time to complete a cure; and yet I have known this tar-water in disorders of the lungs and stomach to prove a very speedy remedy, and to allay the anxiety and heat of a fever in an instant, giving ease and spirits to the patient. This I have often experienced, not without surprise at seeing these salutary effects follow so immediately in a fever on taking a glass of tar-water. Such is the force of these active vivifying principles contained in this balsam.

220. [66]Force or power, strictly speaking, is in the Agent alone who imparts an equivocal force to the invisible elementary fire, or animal spirit of the world (sect. 153, 156, 157); and this to the ignited body or visible flame, which produceth the sense of light and heat. In this chain the first and last links[67] are allowed to be incorporeal: the two intermediate[68] are corporeal—being capable of motion, rarefaction, gravity, and other qualities of bodies. It is fit to distinguish these things, in order to avoid ambiguity concerning the nature of fire.

221. Sir Isaac Newton, in his *Optics*[69], asks, Is not fire a body heated so hot as to emit light copiously? for what else, adds he,

[66] In sect. 220—230, Berkeley, criticising the Newtonian theories of Light and an Elastic Æther, recals the pervading doctrine of his own philosophy—its ultimate reference of all proper efficiency in the universe to Mind. He distinguishes the spiritual from the intermediate or corporeal links in his Chain; also Fire from its visible effects; and the Newtonian or elastic from his own fiery Æther.

[67] *i. e.* the supreme Agent, and the sentient intelligence.

[68] *i. e.* the invisible Fire, and the visible flame.

[69] B. III. Qu. 9.

is a red-hot iron than fire? Now, it should seem that to define fire by heat would be to explain a thing by itself. A body heated so hot as to emit light is an ignited body; that is, hath fire in it, is penetrated and agitated by fire, but is not itself fire. And although it should in the third foregoing acceptation, or vulgar sense[70], pass for fire, yet it is not the pure elementary fire (sect. 190) in the second or philosophic sense—such as was understood by the sages of antiquity, and such as is collected in the focus of a burning-glass; much less is it the *vis*, force, or power of burning, destroying, calcining, melting, vitrifying, and raising the perceptions of light and heat: this is truly and really in the incorporeal Agent, and not in the vital spirit of the universe. Motion, and even power in an equivocal sense, may be found in this pure æthereal spirit, which ignites bodies, but is not itself the ignited body; being an instrument or medium by which the real agent (sect. 160) doth operate on grosser bodies.

222. It hath been shewed in Sir Isaac Newton's *Optics*[71], that light is not reflected by impinging on bodies, but by some other cause. And to him it seems probable that as many rays as impinge on the solid parts of bodies are not reflected, but stifled and retained in the bodies. And it is certain the great porosity of all known bodies affords room for much of this light or fire to be lodged therein. Gold itself, the most solid of all metals, seems to have far more pores than solid parts, from water being pressed through it in the Florentine experiment, from magnetic effluvia passing, and from mercury entering, its pores so freely. And it is admitted that water, though impossible to be compressed, hath at least forty times more pores than solid parts. And, as acid particles, joined with those of earth in certain proportions, are so closely united with them as to be quite hid and lost to all appearance, as in *mercurius dulcis* and common sulphur, so also may we conceive the particles of light or fire to be absorbed and latent in grosser bodies.

223. It is the opinion of Sir Isaac Newton that somewhat unknown remains *in vacuo*, when the air is exhausted. This unknown medium he calls æther[72]. He supposeth it to be more

[70] *i. e.* as visible flame.

[71] B. II. Prop. 8.

[72] In his *Letter to Mr. Boyle on the Cause of Gravitation* (Feb. 28, 1679), Newton thus propounds his hypothesis of an *Elastic* Æther:—'And first I suppose there is dif-

subtle in its nature, and more swift in its motion, than light, freely to pervade all bodies, and by its immense elasticity to be expanded throughout all the heavens. Its density is supposed greater in free and open spaces than within the pores of compact bodies. And in passing from the celestial bodies to great distances, it is supposed to grow denser and denser continually; and thereby cause those great bodies to gravitate towards one another, and their respective parts towards their centres, every body endeavouring to pass from the denser parts of the medium towards the rarer.

224. The extreme minuteness of the parts of this medium, and the velocity of their motion, together with its gravity, density, and elastic force, are thought to qualify it for being the cause of all the natural motions in the universe. To this cause are ascribed the gravity and cohesion of bodies. The refraction of light is also thought to proceed from the different density and elastic force of this æthereal medium in different places. The vibrations of this medium, alternately concurring with, or obstructing the motions of the rays of light, are supposed to produce the fits of easy reflection and transmission. Light by the vibrations of this medium is thought to communicate heat to bodies. Animal motion and sensation are also accounted for by the vibrating motions of this æthereal medium, propagated through the solid capillaments of the nerves. In a word, all the phænomena and properties of bodies, that were before attributed to attraction, upon later thoughts seem ascribed to this æther, together with the various attractions themselves.

225. But, in the philosophy of Sir Isaac Newton, the fits (as they are called) of easy transmission and reflection seem as well accounted for by vibrations excited in bodies by the rays of light, and the refraction of light by the attraction of bodies. To explain the vibrations of light by those of a more subtle medium seems an uncouth explication. And gravity seems not an effect of the density and elasticity of æther, but rather to be produced by some

fused through all places an æthereal substance, capable of contraction or dilation, strongly elastic, in a word, much like air in all respects, but far more subtle. I suppose this Æther pervades all gross bodies, but yet so as to stand rarer in their pores than in free places; and so much the rarer as their pores are less. And this I suppose to be the cause,' &c. (*Opera*, vol. IV. pp. 384—394.) Cf. *Optics*, B. III. Qu. 18—23.

other cause: which Sir Isaac himself insinuates[73] to have been the opinion even of those ancients who took vacuum, atoms, and the gravity of atoms, for the principles of their philosophy; tacitly attributing (as he well observes) gravity to some other cause distinct from matter, from atoms, and consequently from that homogeneous æther or elastic fluid. The elasticity of which fluid is supposed to depend upon, to be defined and measured by, its density; and this by the quantity of matter in one particle, multiplied by the number of particles contained in a given space; and the quantity of matter in any one particle [[74]or body of a given size] to be determined by its gravity. Should not therefore gravity seem the original property and first supposed? On the other hand, if force be considered as prescinded from gravity and matter, and as existing only in points or centres[75], what can this amount to but an abstract, spiritual, incorporeal force?

226. It doth not seem necessary, from the phænomena, to suppose any medium more active and subtle than light or fire. Light being allowed to move at the rate of about ten millions of miles in a minute, what occasion is there to conceive another medium of still smaller and more moveable parts? Light or fire seems the same with æther. So the ancients understood, and so the Greek word implies. It pervades all things (sect. 157), is everywhere present. And this same subtle medium, according to its various quantities, motions, and determinations, sheweth itself in different effects or appearances, and is æther, light, or fire.

227. The particles of æther fly asunder with the greatest force; therefore when united they must (according to the Newtonian doctrine) attract each other with the greatest force; therefore they are acids, or constitute the acid (sect. 130); but this united with earthy parts maketh alkali, as Sir Isaac teacheth in his tract *De Acido*[76]; alkali, as appears in cantharides and lixivial salts, is a caustic; caustics are fire; therefore acid is fire; therefore æther is fire; and if fire, light.. We are not therefore obliged to admit a new medium distinct from light, and of a finer and more exquisite substance, for the explication of phænomena which appear

[73] *Opticks*, B. III. Qu. 28. See also Clarke's *Fifth Reply* to Leibnitz.

[74] In the early editions.

[75] As in Boscovich's theory, and as in some recent speculations. See *The World as Dynamical and Immaterial* (1868), by Mr. R. S. Wyld.

[76] *De Natura Acidorum*. See sect. 126, editor's note.

to be as well explained without it. How can the density or elasticity of æther account for the rapid flight of a ray of light from the sun, still swifter as it goes farther from the sun? Or how can it account for the various motions and attractions of different bodies? Why oil and water, mercury and iron, repel, or why other bodies attract each other? Or why a particle of light should repel on one side and attract on the other, as in the case of the Islandic crystal? To explain cohesion by hamate atoms is accounted *ignotum per ignotius*. And is it not as much so to account for the gravity of bodies by the elasticity of æther?

228. It is one thing to arrive at general laws of nature from a contemplation of the phænomena; and another to frame an hypothesis, and from thence deduce the phænomena. Those who suppose epicycles, and by them explain the motions and appearances of the planets, may not therefore be thought to have discovered principles true in fact and nature. And, albeit we may from the premises infer a conclusion, it will not follow that we can argue reciprocally, and from the conclusion infer the premises. For instance, supposing an elastic fluid, whose constituent minute particles are equidistant from each other, and of equal densities and diameters, and recede one from another with a centrifugal force which is inversely as the distance of the centres; and admitting that from such supposition it must follow that the density and elastic force of such fluid are in the inverse proportion of the space it occupies when compressed by any force; yet we cannot reciprocally infer that a fluid endued with this property must therefore consist of such supposed equal particles: for it would then follow that the constituent particles of air were of equal densities and diameters; whereas it is certain that air is an heterogeneous mass, containing in its composition an infinite variety of exhalations, from the different bodies which make up this terraqueous globe.

229. The phænomena of light, animal spirit, muscular motion, fermentation, vegetation, and other natural operations, seem to require nothing more than the intellectual and artificial fire of Heraclitus, Hippocrates, the Stoics (sect. 166, 168), and other ancients. Intellect, superadded to æthereal spirit, fire, or light, moves, and moves regularly; proceeding in a method, as the Stoics, or increasing and diminishing by measure, as Heraclitus expressed it. The Stoics held that fire comprehended and included

spermatic reasons or forms (λόγους σπερματικοὺς) of all natural igs. As the forms of things have their ideal existence in the llect, so it should seem that seminal principles have their ıral existence in the light (sect. 164); a medium consisting of rogeneous parts, differing from each other in divers qualities appear to sense, and not improbably having many original erties, attractions, repulsions, and motions, the laws and ıres whereof are indiscernible to us, otherwise than in their ote effects. And this animated heterogeneous fire should seem ıore adequate cause, whereby to explain the phænomena of ıre, than one uniform æthereal medium.

30. Aristotle, indeed, excepts against the elements being ani-ed. Yet nothing hinders why that power of the soul styled ım κινητικὴ, or locomotive[77], may not reside therein, under the ction of an Intellect—in such sense and as properly as it is to reside in animal bodies. It must nevertheless be owned, albeit that philosopher acknowledgeth a Divine force or energy re, yet to say that fire is alive, or that having a soul it should be alive, seem to him equally absurd. See his second book *Partibus Animalium*[78].

31. [79] The laws of attraction and repulsion are to be regarded as of motion; and these only as rules or methods observed in the uctions of natural effects, the efficient and final causes whereof ıot of mechanical consideration. Certainly, if the explaining ænomenon be to assign its proper efficient and final cause (sect. 155, 160), it should seem the mechanical philosophers never ıained any thing; their province being only to discover the

[77] Cf. sect. 153.

[78] Cap. 3. See also *De Anima*, lib. I. c. 5, Aristotle seems to reject, as wanting ce, the supposition (adopted partly to ı perception) that the principle of Life) is diffused through the universe; or t to deny that if an animated Fire or re so diffused, it could be identified be life to which animated motion is d.

[79] Sect. 231—250 reject the 'corpuscu- or merely mechanical, philosophy of ion, as well as the Newtonian hypo- of an elastic Æther (insufficient even sical explanations), as no ultimate or ysical account of Nature at all; inas- much as being *perceived*, and likewise being *moved by spiritual agency*, are metaphysically necessary to 'phænomena' as such. Berkeley, like Plato, recognises Mind in all motion; though he does not, like Plato in the *Sophistes*, attribute motion to mind. Like Plato, too, in the *Timæus*, he distinguishes his vital Fire, and universally animating Soul, from the Supreme, Eternal Mind. This interpolated medium, like the Plastic Nature adopted by Cudworth, may be due to a tendency (of which, in his early writings at least, Berkeley shews no sign), first to assume, and then to try to bridge over, a chasm between Divine Power and the phenomena of our immediate sense-experience.

laws of nature, that is, the general rules and methods of motion, and to account for particular phænomena by reducing them under, or shewing their conformity to, such general rules.

232. Some corpuscularian philosophers of the last age have indeed attempted to explain the formation of this world and its phænomena by a few simple laws of mechanism. But, if we consider the various productions of nature, in the mineral, vegetable, and animal parts of the creation, I believe we shall see cause to affirm, that not any one of them has hitherto been, or can be, accounted for on principles merely mechanical; and that nothing could be more vain and imaginary than to suppose with Descartes, that merely from [[80] a circular motion's] being impressed by the supreme Agent on the particles of extended substance, the whole world, with all its several parts, appurtenances, and phænomena, might be produced, by a necessary consequence, from the laws of motion.

233. Others suppose that God did more at the beginning, having then made the seeds of all vegetables and animals, containing their solid organical parts in miniature, the gradual filling and evolution of which, by the influx of proper juices, doth constitute the generation and growth of a living body. So that the artificial structure of plants and animals daily generated requires no present exercise of art to produce it, having been already framed at the origin of the world, which with all its parts hath ever since subsisted; going like a clock or machine by itself, according to the laws of nature, without the immediate hand of the artist [81]. But how can this hypothesis explain the blended features of different species in mules and other mongrels? or the parts added or changed, and sometimes whole limbs lost, by marking in the womb? or how can it account for the resurrection of a tree from its stump, or the vegetative power in its cuttings? in which cases we must necessarily conceive something more than the mere evolution of a seed.

[80] 'Circular motions'—in first edition. He alludes to the vortices of Descartes, which, however, that philosopher held conjoined with a theory of occasional and immediate Divine causation, not as a preestablished harmony.

[81] As in Leibnitz's theory of an original instead of a constant Providence. See the *Collection of Papers* which passed between Leibnitz and Dr. Samuel Clarke (pp. 4, 26—34, &c.), which seems to be here in Berkeley's eye. So, too, in recent theories of cosmical evolution. Perhaps the whole question, as it concerns the relations of Supreme Mind to time, is irrelevant and indeterminable.

234. Mechanical laws of nature or motion direct us how to act, and teach us what to expect. Where intellect presides there will be method and order, and therefore rules, which if not stated and constant would cease to be rules. There is therefore a constancy in things, which is styled the Course of Nature (sect. 160). All the phænomena in nature are produced by motion[82]. There appears an uniform working in things great and small, by attracting and repelling forces. But the particular laws of attraction and repulsion are various. Nor are we concerned at all about the forces, neither can we know or measure them otherwise than by their effects, that is to say, the motions; which motions only, and not the forces, are indeed in the bodies (sect. 155). Bodies are moved to or from each other, and this is performed according to different laws. The natural or mechanic philosopher endeavours to discover those laws by experiment and reasoning. But what is said of forces residing in bodies, whether attracting or repelling, is to be regarded only as a mathematical hypothesis[83], and not as any thing really existing in nature.

235. We are not therefore seriously to suppose, with certain mechanic philosophers, that the minute particles of bodies have real forces or powers, by which they act on each other, to produce the various phænomena in nature. The minute corpuscles are impelled and directed, that is to say, moved to and from each other, according to various rules or laws of motion. The laws of gravity, magnetism, and electricity are divers. And it is not known what other different rules or laws of motion might be established by the Author of nature. Some bodies approach together, others fly asunder, and perhaps some others do neither. When salt of tartar flows *per deliquium*, it is visible that the particles of water floating in the air are moved towards the particles of salt, and joined with them. And when we behold vulgar salt not to flow *per deliquium*, may we not conclude that the same law of nature and motion doth not obtain between its particles and those of the floating vapours? A drop of water assumes a round figure, because its parts are moved towards each other. But the particles of oil and vinegar have no such disposition to unite. And when flies walk in water, without wetting their feet, it is attributed to a repelling force or

[82] *i. e.* are, phenomenally or sensibly considered, resolvable into laws of motion— which is itself perceptible in sense.

[83] Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 67—70.

faculty in the flies' feet. But this is obscure, though the phænomenon be plain.

236. It is not improbable, and seems not unsupported by experiments, that as in algebra, where positive quantities cease there negative begin, even so in mechanics, where attracting forces cease there repelling forces begin: or (to express it more properly) where bodies cease to be moved towards, they begin to be moved from each other. This Sir Isaac Newton infers from the production of air and vapours, whose particles fly asunder with such vehement force. We behold iron move towards the loadstone, straws towards amber, heavy bodies towards the earth. The laws of these motions are various. And when it is said that all the motions and changes in the great world arise from attraction—the elasticity of the air, the motion of water, the descent of heavy, and the ascent of light bodies, being all ascribed to the same principle; when from insensible attractions of most minute particles at the smallest distance are derived cohesion, dissolution, coagulation, animal secretion, fermentation, and all chemical operations; and when it is said that without such principles there never would have been any motion in the world, and without the continuance thereof all motion would cease; in all this we know or understand no more than that bodies are moved according to a certain order, and that they do not move themselves.

237. So likewise, how to explain all those various motions and effects, by the density and elasticity of æther, seems incomprehensible (sect. 153, 162). For instance, why should the acid particles draw those of water and repel each other? Why should some salts attract vapours in the air, and others not? Why should the particles of common salt repel each other, so as not to subside in water? Why should the most repellent particles be the most attractive upon contact? Or why should the repellent begin where the attractive faculty leaves off? These, and numberless other effects, seem inexplicable on mechanical principles; or otherwise than by recourse to a mind or spiritual agent (sect. 154, 220). Nor will it suffice from present phænomena and effects, through a chain of natural causes and subordinate blind agents, to trace a Divine Intellect as the remote[84] original cause, that first created

[84] Cf. *Vindication of the New Theory of Vision*, which is pervaded throughout by the doctrine of a sensibly manifested constant Providence, as contrasted with an Epicurean

the world, and then set it a going. We cannot make even one single step in accounting for the phænomena, without admitting the immediate[84] presence and immediate[84] action of an incorporeal agent, who connects, moves, and disposes all things, according to such rules, and for such purposes, as seem good to him.

238. It is an old opinion, adopted by the moderns, that the elements and other natural bodies are changed each into other (sect. 148). Now, as the particles of different bodies are agitated by different forces, attracting and repelling, or, to speak more accurately, are moved by different laws, how can these forces or laws be changed, and this change accounted for by an elastic æther? Such a medium—distinct from light or fire—seemeth not to be made out by any proof, nor to be of any use in explaining the phænomena. But if there be any medium employed, as a subordinate cause or instrument in attraction, it would rather seem to be light (sect. 152, 156); since, by an experiment of Mr. Boyle's[85], amber, that shewed no sign of attraction in the shade, being placed where the sunbeams shone upon it, immediately attracted light bodies. Besides, it hath been discovered by Sir Isaac Newton[86], and an admirable discovery it was, that light is an heterogeneous medium, consisting of particles endued with original distinct properties (sect. 40, 181). And upon these, if I may venture to give my conjectures, it seemeth probable the specific properties of bodies, and the force of specific medicines, may depend[87]. Different sides of the same ray shall, one approach and the other recede from the Islandic crystal; can this be accounted for by the elasticity of a fine medium, or by the general laws of motion, or by any mechanical principles whatever? And if not, what should hinder but there may be specific medicines, whose operation depends not upon mechanical principles, how much soever that notion hath been exploded of late years?

239. Why may we not suppose certain idiosyncrasies, sympathies, oppositions, in the solids, or fluids, or animal spirit of a human body, with regard to the fine insensible parts of minerals or vegetables, impregnated by rays of light of different properties;

Theism. Berkeley sometimes seems to see in the 'philosophy of Fire' an intense, yet modified, expression of this.

[84] See Boyle's *Works*, vol. V. p. 265.

[85] See *Opics*, B. I. Prop. 4.

[87] *i.e.* as their ultimate *physical* cause or law—Fire or Light being, for these reasons, scientifically preferable to a heterogeneous elastic æther. Cf. sect. 217—219.

not depending on the different size, figure, number, solidity, or weight of those particles, nor on the general laws of motion, nor on the density or elasticity of a medium, but merely and altogether on the good pleasure of the Creator, in the original formation of things? From whence divers unaccountable and unforeseen motions may arise in the animal economy; from whence also various peculiar and specific virtues may be conceived to arise, residing in certain medicines, and not to be explained by mechanical principles. For, although the general known laws of motion are to be deemed mechanical, yet peculiar motions of the insensible parts, and peculiar properties depending thereon, are occult and specific.

240. The words attraction and repulsion may, in compliance with custom, be used where, accurately speaking, motion alone is meant. And in that sense it may be said that peculiar attractions or repulsions in the parts are attended with specific properties in the whole. The particles of light are vehemently moved to or from, retained, or rejected by, objects: which is the same thing as to say, with Sir Isaac Newton, that the particles of acids are endued with great attractive force (sect. 202), wherein their activity consists; whence fermentation and dissolution; and that the most repellent are, upon contact, the most attracting particles.

241. Gravity and fermentation are received for two most extensive principles. From fermentation are derived the motion and warmth of the heart and blood in animals, subterraneous heat, fires, and earthquakes, meteors, and changes in the atmosphere. And that attracting and repelling forces operate in the nutrition and dissolution of animal and vegetable bodies is the doctrine both of Hippocrates and Sir Isaac Newton. The former of these celebrated authors, in his Treatise concerning Diet or Regimen[88], observes that in the nourishment of man, one part repels and another attracts. And again in the same Treatise[89], two carpenters, saith he, saw a piece of timber: one draws, the other pushes: these two actions tend to one and the same end, though in a contrary direction, one up, the other down: this imitates the nature of man: πνεῦμα τὸ μὲν ἕλκει τὸ δὲ ὠθέει.

242. It is the general maxim of Hippocrates, that the manner wherein nature acts consisteth in attracting what is meet and

[88] *Opera*, Vol. I. p. 636 (ed. Lips. 1825). [89] *Ibid.* p. 642.

good, and in repelling what is disagreeable or hurtful. He makes the whole of the animal economy to be administered by the faculties or powers of nature. Nature alone, saith he, sufficeth for all things to animals. She knows of herself what is necessary for them. Whence it is plain he means a conscious intelligent nature, that presides and moves the æthereal spirit. And though he declares all things are accomplished on man by necessity, yet it is not a blind fate or chain of mere corporeal causes, but a Divine Necessity, as he himself expressly calls it[90]. And what is this but an overruling intelligent power that disposeth of all things?

243. Attraction cannot produce, and in that sense account for, the phænomena, being itself one of the phænomena produced and to be accounted for (sect. 160, 235). Attraction is performed by different laws, and cannot therefore in all cases be the effect of the elasticity of one uniform medium. The phænomena of electrical bodies, the laws and variations of magnetism, and, not to mention other kinds, even gravity, are not explained by elasticity, a phænomenon not less obscure than itself. But then, although it shew not the agent, yet it sheweth a rule and analogy in nature, to say, that the solid parts of animals are endued with attractive powers whereby from contiguous fluids they draw like to like; and that glands have peculiar powers attractive of peculiar juices (sect. 41). Nature seems better known and explained[91] by attractions and repulsions, than by those other mechanical principles of size, figure, and the like; that is, by Sir Isaac Newton, than Descartes. And natural philosophers excel, as they are more or less acquainted with the laws and methods observed by the Author of nature.

244. The size and shape of particles and general laws of motion can never explain the secretions, without the help of attraction, obscure perhaps as to its cause, but clear as a law. Numberless instances of this might be given. Lemery the younger[92] thought

[90] *Opera*, I. pp. 639—41; also p. 633. This notion of a divine necessity (ἀνάγκη θεία), distinguished from blind materialistic fate, was common among the Greeks. See *e. g.* Plato, *Timæus*, pp. 47, 48; Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 25, 26. Cf. Arist. *Metaph.* lib. IV. c. 5, and the Ps. *De Mundo*, c. 6.

[91] *i. e.* in the merely *physical* explanation which gives, not causes proper, but only signs and their significations, or, as we say, *laws*.

[92] Physician of Louis XV, and professor of chemistry in Paris. He maintained that Fire not only pervades sensible things, as their absolute and ingenerable element, but that it is diffused through their insensible interstices and through space. He made

himself obliged to suppose the particles of light or fire (contrary to all reason) to be of a very gross kind, even greater than the pores of the burnt limestone, in order to account for their being detained or imprisoned therein; but this phænomenon is easily reduced to attraction. There would be no end of enumerating the like cases. The activity and force of æthereal spirit or fire, by the laws of attraction, is imparted to grosser particles (sect. 152, 163), and thereby wonderfully supports the economy of living bodies. By such peculiar compositions and attractions, it seems to be effected that denser fluids can pass where air itself cannot (as oil through leather), and therefore through the nicest and finest strainers of an animal or vegetable.

245. The ancients had some general conception of attracting and repelling powers (sect. 241, 242) as natural principles. Galilæi had particularly considered the attraction of gravity, and made some discovery of the laws thereof. But Sir Isaac Newton, by his singular penetration, profound knowledge in geometry and mechanics, and great exactness in experiments, hath cast a new light on natural science. The laws of attraction and repulsion were in many instances discovered, and first discovered, by him. He shewed their general extent, and therewith, as with a key, opened several deep secrets of nature, in the knowledge whereof he seems to have made a greater progress than all the sects of corpuscularians together had done before him.—Nevertheless, the principle of attraction itself is not to be explained by physical or corporeal causes.

246. The Cartesians attempted to explain it by the nisus of a subtle element, receding from the centre of its motion, and impelling grosser bodies towards it. Sir Isaac Newton in his later thoughts seems (as was before observed) to have adopted somewhat not altogether foreign from this notion, ascribing that to his elastic medium (sect. 237, 238) which Descartes did to his second element. But the great men of antiquity resolved gravity into the immediate action of an intelligent incorporeal being[93]. To which also Sir Isaac Newton[94] himself attests and subscribes: although he may perhaps sometimes be thought to forget himself, in his manner of speaking of physical agents, which in a strict sense are

contributions to the Memoirs of the Academy, and, like his father, is distinguished in the annals of French chemistry. For Lemery, father and son, see Kopp.

[93] Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 32.

[94] Cf. sect. 225.

none at all; and in supposing real forces to exist in bodies, in which, to speak truly, attraction and repulsion should be considered only as tendencies or motions, that is, as mere effects, and their laws as laws of motion.

247. Though it be supposed the chief business of a natural philosopher to trace out causes from the effects, yet this is to be understood not of agents (sect. 155), but of principles; that is, of component parts, in one sense, or of laws or rules, in another. In strict truth, all agents are incorporeal, and as such are not properly of physical consideration. The astronomer, therefore, the mechanic, or the chemist, not as such, but by accident only, treat of real causes, agents, or efficients. Neither doth it seem, as is supposed by the greatest of mechanical philosophers, that the true way of proceeding in their science is, from known motions in nature to investigate the moving forces. Forasmuch as force is neither corporeal, nor belongs to any corporeal thing (sect. 220); nor yet to be discovered by experiments or mathematical reasonings, which reach no farther than discernible effects, and motions in things passive and moved.

248. *Vis* or force is to the soul what extension is to the body, saith St. Augustin, in his tract concerning the Quantity of the Soul[95]; and without force there is nothing done or made, and consequently there can be no agent. Authority is not to decide in this case. Let any one consult his own notions and reason, as well as experience, concerning the origin of motion, and the respective natures, properties, and differences of soul and body, and he will, if I mistake not, evidently perceive, that there is nothing active in the latter. Nor are they natural agents or corporeal forces which make the particles of bodies to cohere. Nor is it the business of experimental philosophers to find them out.

249. The mechanical philosopher, as hath been already observed, inquires properly concerning the rules and modes of operation alone, and not concerning the cause; forasmuch as nothing mechanical is or really can be a cause (sect. 236, 247). And

[95] *De Quantitate Animæ*, c. 4, &c. The essential passivity of sensible things is the uniform doctrine of Berkeley in all his works. It is partly the foundation of the distinction between his ideas (or phænomena) and persons—between *percepts* (whose *esse* is *percipi*, by any mind) and *volition* (which belongs to the individual spirit)—in a word, between Not-self and Self.

although a mechanical or mathematical philosopher may speak of absolute space[96], absolute motion, and of force, as existing in bodies, causing[97] such motion and proportional thereto; yet what these forces are, which are supposed to be lodged in bodies, to be impressed on bodies, to be multiplied, divided, and communicated from one body to another, and which seem to animate bodies like abstract spirits, or souls, hath been found very difficult, not to say impossible, for thinking men to conceive and explain; as may be seen by consulting Borellus *De Vi Percussionis*, and Torricelli in his *Lezioni Academiche*, among other authors[98].

250. Nor, if we consider the proclivity of mankind to realise their notions, will it seem strange that mechanic philosophers and geometricians should, like other men, be misled by prejudice, and take mathematical hypotheses for real beings existing in bodies, so far as even to make it the very aim and end of their science to compute or measure those phantoms; whereas it is very certain that nothing in truth can be measured or computed[99], besides the very effects or motions themselves. Sir Isaac Newton[1] asks, Have not the minute particles of bodies certain forces or powers by which they act on one another, as well as on the particles of light, for producing most of the phænomena in nature? But, in reality, those minute particles are only agitated according to certain laws of nature, by some other agent, wherein the force exists and not in them, which have only the motion; which motion in the body moved, the Peripatetics rightly judge to be a mere passion, but in the mover to be ἐνέργεια or act.

251. [2] It passeth with many, I know not how, that mechanical principles give a clear solution of the phænomena. The Democritic hypothesis, saith Dr. Cudworth[3], doth much more handsomely and

[96] *Absolute* space and motion, *i. e.* space and motion from which all sense-intelligence (in which lies their essence) has been withdrawn.

[97] Such causality being, with Berkeley, antithetical to sensible things, and essential to minds, on whose perceptions the actual (distinguished from potential) existence of sensible things depends.

[98] Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 8, 9, 16, 19.

[99] [This subject is handled at large in my Latin tract *De Motu*.]—Author.

[1] *Optics*, B. III. Qu. 31.

[2] Sect. 251—264 enunciate, in a condensed form, what, with Berkeley everywhere in his writings, is the true philosophy of the physical universe; according to which all 'phænomena,' coexisting and successive, are regarded as a *language*—being connected together, not as proper causes and effects, but as signs and things signified. His philosophy virtually assumes as a principle, original or derived, our expectation of the constancy of natural order.

[3] The passage is as follows:—'The whole Aristotelical system of philosophy is infinitely to be preferred before the whole Democritical; though the former hath been

intelligibly solve the phænomena, than that of Aristotle and Plato[4]. But, things rightly considered, perhaps it will be found not to solve any phænomenon at all: for all *phænomena*[5] are, to speak truly, appearances in the soul or mind; and it hath never been explained, nor can it be explained, how external bodies, figures, and motions[6], should produce an appearance in the mind. These principles, therefore, do not solve—if by solving is meant assigning the real, either efficient or final, cause of appearances, but only reduce them to general rules.

252. There is a certain analogy, constancy, and uniformity in the phænomena or appearances of nature, which are a foundation for general rules: and these are a grammar for the understanding of nature, or that series of effects in the visible world whereby we are enabled to foresee what will come to pass in the natural course of things. Plotinus observes, in his third Ennead[7], that the art of presaging is in some sort the reading of natural letters denoting order, and that so far forth as analogy obtains in the universe, there may be vaticination. And in reality, he that foretels the motions of the planets, or the effects of medicines, or the results of chemical or mechanical experiments, may be said to do it by natural vaticination.

so much disparaged, and the other cried up of late amongst us. Because, though it cannot be denied but that the Democritic hypothesis doth much more handsomely and intelligibly solve the corporeal phænomena, yet in all other things which are of far the greater moment, it is rather a madness than a Philosophy.'—Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, B. I. ch. I. sect. 45. The ancient lore of the *Intellectual System* may here and elsewhere be compared with that of *Siris*. And the intense recognition of the divinity of natural law, which distinguishes this part of *Siris*, suggests Berkeley's favourite Hooker.

[4] For 'the hypothesis' of Aristotle and Plato, cf. sect. 266, 311—19.

[5] 'Phænomena,' throughout *Siris*, correspond to the 'ideas of sense' in the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, or to what are now called 'sense-percepts.' These are not perceptions, although their sensible existence depends upon their being perceived. They are objects of which *a* soul or mind must be percipient, but they do not depend on any one individual mind. *Phænomenon*, with this precise connotation, is thus a prominent term in *Siris*, and, partly for this reason, I have, in the text, and in references to it, retained Berkeley's orthography.

[6] *i. e.* 'bodies, figures, and motions' assumed to exist *externally*, or in absolute abstraction from mind or power. Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 25.

[7] Lib. III. c. 6. The original of this remarkable passage, which anticipates, and puts on a deeper basis, the modern conception of scientific *prevision*, is as follows:—Καὶ γὰρ οὐ τοῦ μάντεως τὸ διότι, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὅτι μόνον εἰπεῖν, καὶ ἡ τέχνη, ἀνάγνωσις φυσικῶν γραμμάτων καὶ τάξιν δηλούντων, καὶ οὐδαμοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἄτακτον ἀποκλινόντων, μᾶλλον δὲ καταμαρτυρούσης τῆς φορᾶς, καὶ εἰς φῶς ἀγούσης καὶ πρὶν παρ' αὐτῶν φανῆναι, οἷος ἕκαστος, καὶ ὅσα. . . . . Ἀναλογίᾳ δὲ σημαίνοντα τὰ ἄλλα τῷ τετηρηκότι, ἐπεὶ καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι μαντικαὶ τῷ ἀναλόγῳ. . . . . Εἰ τοίνυν ἀναλογία ἐν τῷ παντί, καὶ προειπεῖν ἔνι, etc. This is according to the text of Creuzer. Here, as in some other passages, Plotinus treats sense-perceptions as obscure thoughts of that supersensible world of Reason in which their obscurity disappears. In other passages he seems rather to divorce the former, as illusory and phantasmic, from Reason and Science.

253. We know a thing when we understand it; and we understand it when we can interpret or tell what it signifies. Strictly, the sense knows nothing. We perceive indeed sounds by hearing, and characters by sight. But we are not therefore said to understand them. After the same manner, the phænomena of nature are alike visible to all: but all have not alike learned the connexion of natural things, or understand what they signify, or know how to vaticinate by them. There is no question, saith Socrates in Theæteto[8], concerning that which is agreeable to each person; but concerning what will in time to come be agreeable, of which all men are not equally judges. He who foreknoweth what will be in every kind is the wisest. According to Socrates, you and the cook may judge of a dish on the table equally well, but while the dish is making, the cook can better foretel what will ensue from this or that manner of composing it. Nor is this manner of reasoning confined only to morals or politics; but extends also to natural science.

254. As the natural connexion of signs with the things signified is regular and constant, it forms a sort of Rational Discourse[9] (sect. 152), and is therefore the immediate effect of an intelligent cause. This is agreeable to the philosophy of Plato, and other ancients. Plotinus[10] indeed saith, that which acts naturally is not intellection, but a certain power of moving matter, which doth not know but only do.—And it must be owned that, as faculties are multiplied by philosophers according to their operations, the *will* may be distinguished from the *intellect*. But it will not therefore follow that the Will which operates in the course of nature is not conducted and applied by intellect, although it be granted that neither will understands, nor intellect wills. Therefore, the phænomena of nature, which strike on the senses and are understood by the mind, do form not only a magnificent spectacle, but also a most coherent, entertaining, and instructive Discourse; and to effect this, they are conducted, adjusted, and ranged by the

[8] P. 178.

[9] This is an application of Berkeley's theory of a Visual Language to sensible signs or evidence of every kind—the 'phænomena' existing permanently and really only in and through Divine Ideas or Powers which they express; but, where imperfectly understood (as by men, unscientific and even scientific), having only an imperfect or blurred existence. Bacon's conception of the *interpretability* of Nature or the sensible world so far agrees with this. For Berkeley however, cf. passage added to *Alciphron*, Dial. IV. sect. 12, in the third edition, and given in the Appendix to this volume.

[10] See the *Fourth Ennead*, B. IV. c. 13; also *Second Ennead*, B. III. c. 17.

greatest wisdom. This Language or Discourse is studied with different attention, and interpreted with different degrees of skill. But so far as men have studied and remarked its rules, and can interpret right, so far they may be said to be knowing in nature. A beast is like a man who hears a strange tongue but understands nothing.

255. Nature, saith the learned Doctor Cudworth[11], is not master of art or wisdom: nature is *ratio mersa et confusa*, reason immersed and plunged into matter, and as it were fuddled in it and confounded with it. But the formation of plants and animals, the motions of natural bodies, their various properties, appearances, and vicissitudes, in a word, the whole series of things in this visible world, which we call the Course of Nature, is so wisely managed and carried on that the most improved human reason cannot thoroughly comprehend even the least particle thereof;—so far is it from seeming to be produced by fuddled or confounded reason.

256. Natural productions, it is true, are not all equally perfect. But neither doth it suit with the order of things, the structure of the universe, or the ends of Providence, that they should be so. General rules, we have seen (sect. 249, 252), are necessary to make the world intelligible: and from the constant observations of such rules, natural evils will sometimes unavoidably ensue: things will be produced in a slow length of time, and arrive at different degrees of perfection.

257. It must be owned, we are not conscious of the systole and diastole of the heart, or the motion of the diaphragm. It may not nevertheless be thence inferred, that unknowing nature can act regularly, as well as ourselves. The true inference is—that the self-thinking individual, or human person, is not the real author of those natural motions. And, in fact, no man blames himself if they are wrong, or values himself if they are right[12].—The same may be said of the fingers of a musician, which some object to be moved by habit which understands not; it being evident that what is done by rule must proceed from something that under-

[11] See *Intellectual System*, B. I. ch. 3. § 11, where Cudworth is referring to his 'plastic nature,' and apparently with some expressions of Plotinus in his view. Divine knowledge, in the mind of God, he calls 'unbodied Reason.'

[12] What each agent is acknowledged to be personally responsible for—*i. e.* his own volitions—is thus, with Berkeley, the measure of the real agency of that person.

stands the rule; therefore, if not from the musician himself, from some other active intelligence, the same perhaps which governs bees and spiders, and moves the limbs of those who walk in their sleep[13].

258. Instruments, occasions, and signs (sect. 160) occur in, or rather make up, the whole visible Course of Nature. These, being no agents themselves, are under the direction of one Agent concerting all for one end, the supreme good. All those motions, whether in animal bodies, or in other parts of the system of nature which are not effects of particular wills, seem to spring from the same general cause with the vegetation of plants—an æthereal spirit actuated by a Mind[14].

259. The first poets and theologers of Greece and the East considered the generation of things as ascribed rather to a Divine cause, but the *physici* to natural causes, subordinate to, and directed still by a Divine; except some corporealists and mechanics, who vainly pretended to make a world without a God. The hidden force that unites, adjusts, and causeth all things to hang together, and move in harmony—which Orpheus and Empedocles styled Love—this principle of union is no blind principle, but acts with intellect. This Divine Love and Intellect are not themselves obvious to our view, or otherwise discerned than in their effects. Intellect enlightens, Love connects, and the Sovereign Good attracts all things.

260. All things are made for the supreme good, all things tend to that end: and we may be said to account for a thing, when we show that it is so best. In the Phædon[15], Socrates declares it to be his opinion that he who supposed all things to have been disposed and ordered by a Mind (sect. 154, 160) should not pretend to assign any other cause of them. He blames physiologers for attempting to account for phænomena, particularly for gravity and

[13] Cf. sect. 277. So in Cudworth, *Intellectual System*, B. I. ch. 3. sect. 12—14. A vein of speculation so far similar appears in Aristotle's *Physics;* also in modern discussions on the unconscious mental agency theory.

[14] In short, responsible acts of free rational agents are the *only* effects in the universe which are *not* to be referred to 'æthereal spirit actuated by Mind.' For Orpheus and Empedocles, in sect. 259, see Ritter and Preller, No. 170; Aristotle's *Physics*, VIII. 1.

[15] P. 97. On this philosophy, as understood by Berkeley, the office of merely physical inquiry is not, in any instance, to seek for another efficient cause than the Divine. It is only to interpret (by referring to their laws) the sensible effects in which Divine Thought and Power are as it were objectified and expressed to the finite mind —physical causation being simply the divinely sustained, and constant, relation of sensible signs.

cohesion, by vortexes and æther; overlooking the τὸ ἀγαθὸν and τὸ δέον, the strongest bond and cement which holds together all the parts of the universe, and not discerning the cause itself from those things which only attend it.

261. As in the microcosm, the constant regular tenor of the motions of the viscera and contained juices doth not hinder particular voluntary motions to be impressed by the mind on the animal spirit; even so, in the mundane system, the steady observance of certain laws of nature, in the grosser masses and more conspicuous motions, doth not hinder but a voluntary agent may sometimes communicate particular impressions to the fine æthereal medium, which in the world answers the animal spirit in man. Which two (if they are two), although invisible and inconceivably small, yet seem the real latent springs whereby all the parts of this visible world are moved—albeit they are not to be regarded as a true cause, but only an instrument of motion; and the instrument not as a help to the Creator, but only as a sign to the creature[16].

262. Plotinus supposeth that the soul of the universe is not the original cause or author of the species, but receives them from Intellect, the true principle of order and distinction, the source and giver of forms[17]. Others consider the vegetative soul only as some lower faculty of a higher soul which animates the fiery æthereal spirit (sect. 178). As for the blots and defects which appear in the course of this world—which some have thought to proceed from a fatality or necessity in nature, and others from an evil principle—that same philosopher[18] observes, that it may be the governing Reason produceth and ordaineth all those things; and, not intending that all parts should be equally good, maketh some worse than others by design; as all parts in an animal are not eyes; and in a city, comedy, or picture, all ranks, characters, and colours are not equal or alike; even so excesses, defects, and contrary qualities conspire to the beauty and harmony of the world.

263. It cannot be denied that, with respect to the universe of things, we in this mortal state are like men educated in Plato's cave, looking on shadows with our backs turned to the light. But though our light be dim, and our situation bad, yet if the best use

[16] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 60—66.

[17] The 'soul,' as here distinguished from 'intellect,' is that by which the universe is immediately informed and animated. Ficinus speaks of Intellect as the father, and Matter as the mother of the things of sense.

[18] *Third Ennead*, lib. IX. c. 1.

be made of both, perhaps something may be seen. Proclus[19], in his Commentary on the Theology of Plato, observes there are two sorts of philosophers. The one placed Body first in the order of beings, and made the faculty of thinking depend thereupon, supposing that the principles of all things are corporeal: that Body most really or principally exists, and all other things in a secondary sense, and by virtue of that. Others, making all corporeal things to be dependent upon Soul or Mind, think this to exist in the first place and primary sense, and the being of Bodies to be altogether derived from, and presuppose that of the Mind.

264. Sense and experience acquaint us with the course and analogy of appearances or natural effects. Thought, reason, intellect introduce us into the knowledge of their causes. Sensible appearances, though of a flowing, unstable, and uncertain nature, yet having first occupied the mind, they do by an early prevention render the aftertask of thought more difficult; and, as they amuse the eyes and ears, and are more suited to vulgar uses and the mechanic arts of life, they easily obtain a preference, in the opinion of most men, to those superior principles, which are the later growth of the human mind arrived to maturity and perfection, but, not affecting the corporeal sense, are thought to be so far deficient in point of solidity and reality—sensible and real[20], to common apprehensions, being the same thing. Although it be certain that the principles of science[20] are neither objects of sense nor imagination; and that intellect and reason are alone the sure guides to truth.

265. [21]The successful curiosity of the present age, in arts, and

[19] *In Platonis Theologiam*, lib. I. c. 3. Human thought still oscillates between these extremes.

[20] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 36, 89, &c. on the meaning of 'real' as then intended by Berkeley. In *Siris*, animated by the Platonic spirit, he rises to a reflective recognition of reality as the especial characteristic of the 'principles of science'—the Ideas, or universal relations, of the Common Intellect or Reason: which are apprehended in sense, presentative and representative, at the best, only in a dim and confused way.

[21] In what follows of *Siris* (sect. 266—368) Berkeley vindicates, by the authority of the Ancient Philosophers, Greek and Oriental, his theory of the universe as constantly dependent on, and ultimately explicable, substantially and causally, only in Mind. He thus strives to ascend from sense and the sensuous imagination to the 'principles of Science,' those uncreated necessities of Intellect, through which sense-given 'phænomena' become intelligibly connected.

Not to speak of preceding historical inquirers, Hegel, Erdmann, Ueberweg, and Zeller have modified and extended any conception of Greek and other philosophical opinions, and their concatenation, attainable by Berkeley.

riments, and new systems, is apt to elate men, and make
1 overlook the Ancients. But, notwithstanding that the
uragement and purse of princes, and the united endeavours of
t societies in these later ages, have extended experimental
mechanical knowledge very far, yet it must be owned that the
ents too were not ignorant of many things (sect. 166, 167,
241, 242, &c.), as well in physics as metaphysics, which
aps are more generally, though not first, known in these
ern times.

56. The Pythagoreans and Platonists had a notion of the true
em of the world. They allowed of mechanical principles, but
ated by soul or mind[22]: they distinguished the primary qualities
odies from the secondary, making the former to be physical
es, and they understood physical causes in a right sense[23]: they
that a mind infinite in power, unextended, invisible, immortal,
rned, connected, and contained all things[24]: they saw there
no such thing as real absolute space[25]: that mind, soul, or
t truly and really exists[26]: that bodies exist only in a secondary
dependent sense[27]: that the soul is the place of forms[28]: that
sensible qualities are to be regarded as acts only in the cause,
as passions in us[29]: they accurately considered the differences
tellect, rational soul, and sensitive soul, with their distinct acts
ntellection, reasoning, and sensation[30], points wherein the

ect. 100, 232, 251—254. A great part
is is reflected in the pregnant summary
ek philosophy given in sect. 266, 267.
This famous distinction of the qualities
sible things as primary and secondary,
ley does not here evolve. In his *First*
rse between Hylas and Philonous, the
tion is referred to as unavailable in
e of abstract or irrelative Matter.
it is there argued, are alike relative
mutable. Here the Pythagoreans and
ists are praised for regarding the pri-
qualities as 'physical causes,' or sen-
igns, of the secondary. This is done
s on the principle that *visible and*
le extensions, and their relations, (be-
permanent, impersonal, insensitive, and
ually characteristic of sensible things)
ore appropriately regarded as *signs* of
nt tastes, smells, and sounds than
last of extension. Any so-called
lary qualities (qualities proper) are thus
referred in imagination, as (physical) effects,
to the quantities of sensible extension (pri-
mary qualities) with which they are severally
connected by natural law, and not *vice versa*.
The Atomic theory of the material world,
in part adopted by Locke, so far accords
with this. With Plato, extension and its
geometrical implicates are, it seems, the
qualities exclusively regarded as irrelative or
primary—true for all minds; all the others,
including solidity, are relative. See *Timæus*,
pp. 61—64.

[24] Cf. sect. 279, 288, 300, 320, 322—329.
[25] Cf. sect. 270, 271, 289, 242, 293, 304, 318.
[26] Cf. sect. 290—295.
[27] Cf. sect. 306, 311—318.
[28] Cf. sect. 269, 310, 328.
[29] Cf. sect. 289, 304.
[30] Sect. 275, 302—304.

Cartesians and their followers, who consider sensation as a mode of thinking, seem to have failed. They knew there was a subtle æther[31] pervading the whole mass of corporeal beings, and which was itself actually moved and directed by a mind: and that physical causes[32] were only instruments, or rather marks and signs.

267. Those ancient philosophers understood the generation of animals to consist in the unfolding and distending of the minute imperceptible parts of pre-existing animalcules[33], which passeth for a modern discovery; this they took for the work of nature, but nature animate and intelligent (sect. 172): they understood that all things were alive and in motion[34]: they supposed a concord and discord, a union and disunion, in particles, some attracting, others repelling each other; and that those attractions and repulsions, so various, regular, and useful, could not be accounted for, but by an intelligence presiding and directing all particular motions, for the conservation and benefit of the whole[35].

268. The Egyptians, who impersonated nature, had made her a distinct principle, and even deified her under the name of Isis. But Osiris was understood to be Mind or Reason, chief and sovereign of all. Osiris, if we may believe Plutarch[36], was the first, pure, unmixed, and holy principle, not discernible by the lower faculties; a glimpse whereof, like lightning darting forth, irradiates the understanding; with regard to which Plutarch adds, that Plato and Aristotle termed one part of philosophy ἐποπτικὸν; to wit, when having soared above common mixed objects, and got beyond the precincts of sense and opinion, they arrive to contemplate the first and most simple Being free from all matter and composition. This is that οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα of Plato which employeth mind alone; which alone governs the [[37]world]. And the soul is that which immediately informs and animates nature.

269. Although the Egyptians did symbolically represent the

[31] Cf. sect. 152, 166, 171, 177, 211, 277.
[32] Cf. sect. 155, 160, 231, 235, 247—249, 251—254.
[33] Cf. sect. 282.
[34] Cf. sect. 153, 276.
[35] Cf. sect. 162, 164, 165, 234, 237, 251, 271, 272.
[36] *Isis et Osiris*, c. 78; also Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, B. I. ch. 4, § 18. According to Ritter, Isis connected the transitory and phenomenal with Osiris or Absolute Deity—as in the Λόγος of Philo. Cf. sect. 279 of *Siris*.
[37] 'soul'—in first edition.

supreme Divinity sitting on a lotus[38], and that gesture hath been interpreted to signify the most holy and venerable Being to be utterly at rest reposing within himself; yet, for any thing that appears, this gesture might denote dignity as well as repose. And it cannot be denied, that Jamblichus[39], so knowing in the Egyptian notions, taught that there was an intellect that proceeded to generation, drawing forth the latent powers into light in the formation of things. Nor was this to be understood of an external world, subsisting in real absolute space; for it was a doctrine of those ancient sages, that soul was the place of forms, as may be seen in the twelfth book of the arcane part of divine wisdom, according to the Egyptians[40]. This notion was embraced by divers philosophers of Greece, who may be supposed to have derived it from the same source from whence many of their other opinions were drawn.

270. [41]The doctrine of real, absolute, external Space induced some modern philosophers[42] to conclude it was a part or attribute of

[38] See Wilkinson's *Manners of the Ancient Egyptians*, and Cudworth. Lepsius and Bunsen have opened avenues into ancient Egypt which were closed to Berkeley.

[39] See the paraphrase by Ficinus of the work *De Mysteriis Ægyptiorum*, formerly attributed to Jamblicus.

[40] See Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, B. I. c. 4, § 18, where the Egyptian cosmogony, and 'arcane' theology or metaphysics (*ἀπόρρητος θεολογία*) are discussed. The 'pretended Aristotlelick book,' *De Secretiore parte Divinæ Sapientiæ secundum Ægyptios*, is referred to by Cudworth.

[41] Sect. 270—284, contrast the modern assumption of an absolute Space (distinguished from visible and tangible extensions), as well as blind Necessity or Fate, with the ancient and more spiritual doctrine of *anima mundi*, that immaterial but unconscious influence, with Plato intermediate between the archetypal Ideas and Matter, and with others the supreme vital force of the universe.

[42] *e. g.* Dr. Samuel Clarke. With Berkeley *this* Space is an empty negation. Sensible extension is the only actual space he recognises. Insensible Space, like insensible Matter, is for him a meaningless abstraction, 'a thing merely visionary' (sect. 271). Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 122—126; *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 116, 117; *De Motu*, sect. 52—57, 63. The Space against which Berkeley argues throughout his writings is that of some ancient and many modern mechanical philosophers and mathematicians — a huge, infinitely extended, self-subsistent Entity, supposed to condition all existence and to be somehow an object of external perception. Under this hypothesis, everything in the universe must be extended, and spiritual or unextended beings are impossible: extra-organic bodies are external to us merely because we and they, both alike extended, occupy different and absolute, localities in this space, every thing in it (consisting of *partes extra partes*) being necessarily 'external' to every other. This illimitable phantom-space Berkeley rejects, because neither an *idea* (immediately or mediately) perceived in sense, nor a *notion* derived from mind. Instead of this sort of 'outness' or objectivity, he proceeds upon other conceptions — the antithesis of spirits, and their sensible 'phænomena;' also our acquired knowledge of a sensible externality: but he rejects externality in the things of sense, if by this be meant the transcendent fact or possibility of their sensible existence independently of all sentient mind. Berkeley's Space is sensible extension, created,

God, or that God himself was space; inasmuch as incommunicable attributes of the Deity appeared to agree thereto, such as infinity, immutability, indivisibility, incorporeity, being uncreated, impassive, without beginning or ending—not considering that all these negative properties may belong to nothing. For, nothing hath no limits, cannot be moved, or changed, or divided, is neither created nor destroyed.—A different way of thinking appears in the Hermaic as well as other writings of the ancients. With regard to absolute space, it is observed in the Asclepian Dialogue[43], that the word *space* or *place* hath by itself no meaning; and again, that it is impossible to understand what space alone or pure space is. And Plotinus acknowledgeth no place but soul or mind, expressly affirming that the soul is not in the world, but the world in the soul. And farther, the place of the soul, saith he, is not body, but soul is in mind, and body in the soul. See the third[44] chapter of the fifth book of the fifth Ennead.

271. Concerning absolute space, that phantom of the mechanic and geometrical philosophers (sect. 250), it may suffice to observe that it is neither perceived by any sense, nor proved by any reason, and was accordingly treated by the greatest of the ancients as a thing merely visionary. From the notion of absolute space springs that of absolute motion[45]; and in these are ultimately founded the

and not infinitely divisible, of which the original elements are contributed in touch and sight, and which, when developed, is the singular object of an acquired perception, founded upon the established associations of what we see and what we touch. It is thus concrete and created, and involves locality, in the perceived relations of things visible and tangible to one another. This *acquired* singular intuition of Berkeley is to be distinguished, on the one hand, from a concept or general notion, and, on the other, from Kant's critically discerned pure or *à priori* perception of space, given potentially in pure reason, the necessary condition of our being conscious of sense-phenomena, and that through which their externality is constituted and defined. With Hegel, Space is one of the forms under which Spirit must externalize itself into Nature—thus becoming other than itself. In Plato, Matter and Space (τὸ ἄπειρον, τὸ ἕτερον) are the (undistinguishable) conditions of our knowledge of sensible things. With Aristotle, Space is regarded objectively and physically; see Ps.-Plutarch, lib. I. c. 19. In Zeller (*Die Philosophie der Griechen*, 2ter theil, pp. 296—303), we have a full discussion of Aristotelian Space.

[43] Asicepius, a reputed disciple of Hermes. The work referred to is the famous dialogue between Hermes and Asclepius, *De Natura Deorum*.

[44] See also c. 9 in the same book.

[45] [Our judgment in these matters is not to be overborne by a presumed evidence of mathematical notions and reasonings, since it is plain the mathematicians of this age embrace obscure notions, and uncertain opinions, and are puzzled about them, contradicting each other and disputing like other men: witness their doctrine of Fluxions, about which, within these ten years, I have seen published about twenty tracts and dissertations, whose authors being utterly at variance, and inconsistent with each other, instruct by-standers what to think of their pretensions to evidence.]—Author. Berkeley here refers to the *Analyst* controversy, and repeats his former conclusions. See the Editor's prefatory notes to the *Analyst*, and also to the *Defence of Freethinking in Mathematics*.

notions of external existence, independence, necessity, and fate. —Which Fate, the idol of many moderns, was by old philosophers differently understood, and in such a sense as not to destroy the αὐτεξούσιον of God or man. Parmenides[46], who thought all things to be made by necessity or fate, understood justice and Providence to be the same with fate; which, how fixed and cogent soever with respect to man, may yet be voluntary with respect to God. Empedocles[46] declared fate to be a cause using principles and elements. Heraclitus[46] taught that fate was the general reason that runs through the whole nature of the universe; which nature he supposed to be an æthereal body, the seed of the generation of all things. Plato[46] held fate to be the eternal reason or law of nature. Chrysippus[46] supposed that fate was a spiritual power which disposed the world in order; that it was the reason and law of those things which are administered by Providence.

272. All the foregoing notions of fate, as represented by Plutarch, do plainly shew that those ancient philosophers did not mean by fate, a blind, headlong, unintelligent principle, but an orderly settled course of things, conducted by a wise and provident Mind. And as for the Egyptian doctrine, it is indeed asserted in the Pimander[47], that all things are produced by fate. But Jamblichus, who drew his notions from Egypt, affirms that the whole of things is not bound up in fate; but that there is a principle of the soul higher than nature[48], whereby we may be raised to a union with the gods, and exempt ourselves from fate. And in the Asclepian Dialogue[49] it is expressly said that fate follows the decrees of God. And indeed, as all the motions in nature are evidently the product of reason (sect. 154), it should seem there is no room for necessity—in any other sense than that of a steady regular course.

273. Blind fate and blind chance are at bottom much the same

[46] See Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. cap. 25—28, for the opinions of these philosophers on Fate. Berkeley seems to have these chapters in his eye here.

[47] The dialogue called *Pœmander*, which treats of nature in its ultimate relations to Divine Power and Wisdom,—the most memorable of the Hermic works. It is probably Neo-platonic, and of the fourth century after Christ, though long ascribed to the Egyptian Hermes. In the *Pœmander* the individuality of man seems lost in supreme, spiritual Being and Power. But this is akin to spiritual Fate.

[48] *i. e.* The spiritual principle in the human soul, in possession of which man is in the image of God. See the fragments of Jamblicus, *De Fato*, recovered from the Palatine MSS. (ed. 1668), pp. 177—178, and Ficinus on the *De Mysteriis* (De Fato); also Proclus on Providence and Fate.

[49] Cap. 14, *De Fatis.*

thing, and one no more intelligible than the other. Such is the mutual relation, connexion, motion, and sympathy of the parts of this world, that they seem as it were animated and held together by one soul: and such is their harmony, order, and regular course, as sheweth the soul to be governed and directed by a Mind.—It was an opinion of remote antiquity that the World was an Animal (sect. 153, 172). If we may trust the Hermaic writings, the Egyptians thought all things did partake of life. This opinion was also so general and current among the Greeks that Plutarch[50] asserts all others held the world to be an animal, and governed by Providence, except Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus. And although an animal containing all bodies within itself could not be touched or sensibly affected from without[51], yet it is plain they attributed to it an inward sense and feeling, as well as appetites and aversions; and that from all the various tones, actions, and passions of the universe, they suppose one symphony, one animal act and life to result.

274. Jamblichus[52] declares the world to be one animal, in which the parts, however distant each from other, are nevertheless related and connected by one common nature. And he teacheth, what is also a received notion of the Pythagoreans and Platonics, that there is no chasm in nature, but a Chain or Scale[52] of beings rising by gentle uninterrupted gradations from the lowest to the highest, each nature being informed and perfected by the participation of a higher. As air becomes igneous, so the purest fire becomes animal, and the animal soul becomes intellectual: which is to be understood not of the change of one nature into another, but of the connexion of different natures; each lower nature being, according to those philosophers, as it were a receptacle or subject for the next above it to reside and act in.

275. It is also the doctrine of Platonic philosophers, that Intellect is the very life of living things, the first principle and exemplar of all, from whence by different degrees are derived the inferior classes of life: first the rational[53], then the sensitive, after

[50] *De Placit. Philos.* lib. II. c. 3.

[51] *i. e.* extra-organically.

[52] *De Mysteriis*—Opinio Egyptiorum de Deo. See the relative Commentary of Ficinus. The notion of a Chain (σειρὰ, dim. σειρὶς, whence *Siris*) in nature, connecting the phenomena of the universe with one another, and with Supreme Being, in a Cosmos or orderly system in which each phenomenon is rationally linked with every other, pervaded the ancient world. So Milton, *Par. Lost*, V. 469—490.

[53] *i. e.* the *discursive* reason, as distinguished from the *intuitive*, or Intellect

that the vegetal; but so as in the rational animal there is still somewhat intellectual, again in the sensitive there is somewhat rational, and in the vegetal somewhat sensitive, and lastly, in mixed bodies, as metals and minerals, somewhat of vegetation. By which means the whole is thought to be more perfectly connected. Which doctrine implies that all the faculties, instincts, and motions of inferior beings, in their several respective subordinations, are derived from, and depend upon Mind and Intellect.

276. Both Stoics and Platonics held the world to be alive; though sometimes it be mentioned as a sentient animal, sometimes as a plant or vegetable[54]. But in this, notwithstanding what hath been surmised by some learned men, there seems to be no Atheism. For, so long as the world is supposed to be quickened by elementary fire or spirit, which is itself animated by soul, and directed by understanding, it follows that all parts thereof originally depend upon, and may be reduced unto the same indivisible stem or principle, to wit, a Supreme Mind—which is the concurrent doctrine of Pythagoreans, Platonics, and Stoics.

277. There is, according to those philosophers, a life infused throughout all things: the *πῦρ νοερὸν, πῦρ τεχνικὸν,* an intellectual and artificial fire (sect. 166, 168, 174, 175, &c.)—an inward principle, animal spirit, or natural life, producing and forming within as art doth without; regulating, moderating, and reconciling the various motions, qualities, and parts of this mundane system. By virtue of this life the great masses are held together in their orderly courses, as well as the minutest particles governed in their natural motions, according to the several laws of attraction, gravity, electricity, magnetism, and the rest. It is this gives instincts, teaches the spider her web, and the bee her honey. This it is that directs the roots of plants to draw forth juices from the earth, and the leaves and corticle vessels to separate and attract such particles of air, and elementary fire, as suit their respective natures[55].

proper.—The ancient notion of the graduated organic unity of the universe, referred to in this section, traversed by the Cartesian antithesis of thought and extension, conscious human agents and mechanically moved brutes, reappears in the speculation of the last, and still more of this century, *e.g.* in Fichte's *Die Bestimmung des Menschen.*

[54] Cf. sect. 153. See Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 3; Diogenes Laert. lib. VII.

[55] Cf. sect. 257.

278. Nature seems to be not otherwise distinguished from the *anima mundi* than as life is from soul[56], and, upon the principles of the oldest philosophers, may not improperly or incongruously be styled the life of the world. Some Platonics, indeed, regard life as the act of nature, in like manner as intellection is of the mind or intellect. As the First Intellect acts by understanding, so nature according to them acts or generates by living. But life is the act of the soul, and seems to be very nature itself, which is not the principle, but the result of another and higher principle, being a life resulting from soul, as cogitation from intellect.

279. If nature be [[57]supposed] the life of the world, animated by one soul, compacted into one frame, and directed or governed in all parts by one mind: this system cannot be accused of Atheism; though perhaps it may of mistake or impropriety. And yet, as one presiding mind gives unity to the infinite aggregate of things, by a mutual communion of actions and passions, and an adjustment of parts, causing all to concur in one view to one and the same end—the ultimate and supreme good of the whole, it should seem reasonable to say, with Ocellus Lucanus[58] the Pythagorean, that as life holds together the bodies of animals, the cause whereof is the soul; and as a city is held together by concord, the cause whereof is law, even so the world is held together by harmony, the cause whereof is God. And in this sense the world or universe may be considered either as one animal or one city (sect. 172, 277).

280. Aristotle[59] disapproves the opinion of those who hold a soul to be diffused throughout the world; and for this reason, because the elements are not alive. Though perhaps it may not be easy to prove that blood and animal spirit are more alive in man, than water and fire in the world. That philosopher, in his books of the Soul[60], remarks upon an opinion set forth in the Orphics, of the soul's entering from the universe into living creatures being borne

[56] 'Soul,' *i. e.* animating *principle*, as distinguished from its effects or manifestations, which constitute living nature — all nature being, by the supposition, animated. Soul (ψυχή) was distinguished from body, on the one hand, and from reason (νοῦς), on the other—as mediating between them. The ancient notion of the animation of the universe was common, in one form or another, among the physical philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for instance, Telesius and Campanella.

[57] Not in the early editions.

[58] Ocelli Lucani, *De Legibus* (Fragmentum ex Stobæo Egl. Phys. lib. I. cap. 16)—now rejected as spurious, with the other fragments attributed to Ocellus Lucanus.

[59] Cf. sect. 230.

[60] *De Anima*, lib. I. c. 5.

by winds—that this cannot be true of plants, or of certain animals which do not breathe. But air vessels are by later experiments allowed to be found in all plants and animals[61]. And air may in some sort not improperly be said to be the carrier or vehicle of the soul, inasmuch as it is the vehicle of fire, which is the spirit immediately moved and animated by the soul (sect. 163, 171).

281. The living fire, the living, omniform seminary of the world, and other expressions of the like nature, occurring in the Ancient and Platonic philosophy[62], how can they be understood exclusive of light or elemental fire, the particles of which are known to be heterogeneous, and, for aught we know, may some of them be organised, and, notwithstanding their wonderful minuteness, contain original seeds which, being formed and sown in a proper matrix, do gradually unfold and manifest themselves, still growing to a just proportion of the species.

282. May not this æthereal seminary, consistently with the notions of that philosophy which ascribed much of generation to celestial influence, be supposed to impregnate plants and animals with the first principles, the stamina, or those animalcules which Plato, in his *Timæus*[63], saith are invisible for their smallness, but, being sown in a proper matrix, are therein gradually distended and explicated by nourishment, and at length the animals brought forth to light? Which notion hath been revived and received of late years by many, who perhaps are not aware of its antiquity, or that it was to be found in Plato. Timæus Locrensis, in his book of the Soul of the World[64], supposeth even souls to be derived from the celestial luminaries, excepting only the rational or intellectual part. But what influence or influx is there from the celestial bodies which hath not light for its vehicle? (sect. 43).

283. What other nature there should be intermediate between the soul of the world (sect. 171) and this gross corporeal system, which might be the vehicle of life, or, to use the language of philosophers, might receive or be impressed with the forms of things, is difficult to comprehend. It is a vulgar remark, that the works of art do not bear a nice microscopical inspection, but the

[61] Cf. sect. 29.

[62] So also in Ficinus, in many passages.

[63] P. 91. This Platonic notion was received, among others, by Leuwenhoeck (1632—1723), the Dutch naturalist. Cf. sect. 267, 283.

[64] Timæi Locri, *De Anima Mundi*, cap. 4—a tract now regarded as spurious.

more helps are used, and the more nicely you pry into natural productions, the more do you discover of the fine mechanism of nature, which is endless or inexhaustible; new and other parts, more subtle and delicate than the precedent, still continuing to offer themselves to view. And these microscopical observations have confirmed the ancient theory concerning generation, delivered in the *Timæus* of Plato. But that theory or hypothesis, how agreeable soever to modern discoveries, is not alone sufficient to explain the phænomena, without the immediate action of a mind. And Ficinus, notwithstanding what himself and other Platonics say of a plastic nature, is obliged to own that with the mundane force or soul it is to be understood there is joined an intelligence, upon which the seminal nature constantly depends, and by which it is governed.

284. Alcinous, in his tract of the Doctrine of Plato[65], saith that God hath given the world both mind and soul: others include both in the word soul, and suppose the soul of the world to be God. Philo[66] appears to be of this opinion in several parts of his writings. And Virgil[67], who was no stranger to the Pythagorean and Platonic tenets, writes to the same purpose:

> Deum namque ire per omnes
> Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.
> Hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne ferarum,
> Quemque sibi tenues nascentem arcessere vitas.

Thus much the schools of Plato and Pythagoras seem agreed in, to wit, that the Soul of the World (sect. 153, 172), whether having a distinct mind of its own, or directed by a superior mind (sect. 154, 279), doth embrace all its parts, connect them by an invisible and indissoluble Chain, and preserve them ever well adjusted and in good order.

285. [68]Naturalists, whose proper province it is to consider phæ-

[65] The *De Doctrina Platonis* of Alcinous, cap. 14,—an exposition of Platonism, long in high repute.

[66] The syncretism of Philo, the Jewish philosopher (a contemporary of Christ), is so little constructed upon a consistent principle, that it is difficult, notwithstanding occasional passages, to determine whether this opinion should be attributed to him. With the Stoics, he ascribes the central activity to Deity, and mere passivity to matter, in analogy with the suggestion of the text. On the other hand, the ineffability of Deity, and the contrast or antithesis between God and the universe, are much dwelt upon in his writings.

[67] *Georg.* IV. 221—24.

[68] In sect. 285—296 the theory of the

nomena, experiments, mechanical organs and motions, principally regard the visible frame of things or corporeal world—supposing soul to be contained in body. And this hypothesis may be tolerated in physics, as it is not necessary in the arts of dialling or navigation to mention the true system or earth's motion. But those who, not content with sensible appearances, would penetrate into the real and true causes (the object of theology[69], metaphysics, or the *philosophia prima*), will rectify this error, and speak of the world as contained by the soul, and not the soul by the world[69].

286. Aristotle hath observed there were indeed some who thought so grossly as to suppose the universe to be one only corporeal and extended nature: but in the first book of his Metaphysics[70] he justly remarks they were guilty of a great mistake; forasmuch as they took into their account the elements of corporeal beings alone, whereas there are incorporeal beings also in the universe; and while they attempted to assign the causes of generation and corruption, and account for the nature of all things, they did at the same time destroy the very cause of motion.

287. It is a doctrine among other speculations contained in the Hermaic writings—that all things are One. And it is not improbable that Orpheus, Parmenides, and others among the Greeks, might have derived their notion of Τὸ Ἕν, THE ONE, from Egypt. Though that subtle metaphysician Parmenides, in his doctrine of ἓν ἑστως, seems to have added something of his own. If we suppose that one and the same Mind is the universal principle of order and harmony throughout the world, containing and connecting all its parts, and giving unity to the system, there seems to be nothing atheistical or impious in this supposition.

288. Number is no object of sense: it is an act of the mind. The same thing in a different conception is one or many[71]. Com-

ultimate dependence of sensible things, as well as the space which contains them, on all-containing and all-regulating Mind, 'the source of unity and identity, harmony and order, existence and stability' (sect. 295)—of which the doctrine of *anima mundi* is an imperfect adumbration—is further considered and unfolded. The *anima mundi* involves the vitality of the universe, and resolves physical cosmology into biology. See Pseudo-Plutarch, lib. II. c. 35; also Bessarion, and Cudworth.

[69] Cf. sect. 263. With Aristotle Theology and Metaphysics are one. See *Metaph.* lib. VI. c. 1 and lib. XI. c. 7.

[70] *Metaph.* lib. I. c. 3.

[71] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 12, 13, 119—122.

prehending God and the creatures in one general notion, we may say that all things together make one universe, or τὸ πᾶν. But if we should say that all things make one God;—this would, indeed, be an erroneous notion of God, but would not amount to Atheism, so long as mind or intellect was admitted to be the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the governing part[72]. It is, nevertheless, more respectful, and consequently the truer notion of God, to suppose him neither made up of parts, nor to be himself a part of any whole whatsoever.

289. All those who conceived the universe to be an animal must, in consequence of that notion, suppose all things to be one. But to conceive God to be the sentient soul of an animal is altogether unworthy and absurd. There is no sense nor sensory, nor any thing like a sense or sensory, in God. Sense implies an impression from some other being, and denotes a dependence in the soul which hath it. Sense is a passion: and passions imply imperfection. God knoweth all things, as pure mind or intellect; but nothing by sense, nor in nor through a sensory. Therefore to suppose a sensory of any kind—whether space[73] or any other—in God, would be very wrong, and lead us into false conceptions of His nature. The presuming there was such a thing as real, absolute, uncreated space seems to have occasioned that modern mistake. But this presumption was without grounds[74].

290. Body is opposite to spirit or mind. We have a notion of spirit from thought and action. We have a notion of body from resistance[75]. So far forth as there is real power, there is spirit. So far forth as there is resistance, there is inability or want of power: that is, there is a negation of spirit. We are embodied, that is, we are clogged by weight, and hindered by resistance. But in respect of a perfect spirit, there is nothing hard or impenetrable: there is no resistance to the Deity: nor hath he any body: nor is the supreme Being united to the world as the soul of an animal is to its body; which necessarily implieth defect, both as an instrument, and as a constant weight and impediment.

[72] But it is a Theism which seems irreconcilable with finite moral agency, and therefore with a moral government, unless we exclude finite persons from the 'things.'

[73] As Newton suggests.

[74] Cf. sect. 270, 271, 378, where Berkeley gives reasons for rejecting 'uncreated space'—as distinguished from sensible extension.

[75] Berkeley notes (passive) *resistance*, not *extension*, as the characteristic of body. So too in his early philosophical works.

291. Thus much it consists with piety to say—that a Divine Agent doth by his virtue permeate and govern the elementary fire or light (sect. 157, 172), which serves as animal spirit to enliven and actuate the whole mass, and all the members of this visible world[76]. Nor is this doctrine less philosophical than pious. We see all nature alive or in motion. We see water turned into air, and air rarefied and made elastic (sect. 149, 152, 200) by the attraction of another medium, more pure indeed, more subtle, and more volatile, than air. But still, as this is a moveable, extended, and consequently a corporeal being (sect. 207), it cannot be itself the principle of motion, but leads us naturally and necessarily to an incorporeal spirit or agent. We are conscious that a spirit can begin, alter, or determine motion; but nothing of this appears in body. Nay, the contrary is evident, both to experiment and reflection.

292. Natural phænomena are only natural appearances. They are, therefore, such as we see and perceive them[77]. Their real and objective[78] natures are, therefore, the same; passive without anything active, fluent and changing without anything permanent in them. However, as these make the first impressions, and the mind takes her first flight and spring, as it were, by resting her foot on these objects, they are not only first considered by all men, but most considered by most men. They and the phantoms that result from those appearances, the children of imagination grafted upon sense—such for example as pure space (sect. 270)—are thought by many the very first in existence and stability, and to embrace and comprehend all other beings.

293. Now, although such phantoms as corporeal forces, absolute motions, and real spaces do pass in physics for causes and principles (sect. 220, 249, 250), yet are they in truth but hypotheses[79]; nor can they be the objects of real science. They pass never-

[76] We have here a hint of the origin of Berkeley's inclination to the 'fire philosophy.' He thus seemed to escape occasion for conceiving God to be the sentient soul of the animal Universe, and could figure Divine Omnipresence as Omnipotence, not existence coextensive with an absolute space. The *anima mundi* of Plato, the 'plastic nature' of Cudworth and others, and the *archæus* of Paracelsus may perhaps be similarly explained. Note what is said of 'sense' in sect. 259.

[77] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 25, 26; also sect. 30, 33, where he discerns steadiness or permanence (and, thus far, substance) in sensible things—left in the back-ground in this section of the more Platonic *Siris*.

[78] 'Objective' = apparent or phenomenal.

[79] Cf. *De Motu*, sect. 66, which assails those favourite abstractions of natural philosophers.

theless in physics, conversant about things of sense, and confined to experiments and mechanics. But when we enter the province of the *philosophia prima*, we discover another order of beings—mind and its acts, permanent being, not dependent on corporeal things, nor resulting, nor connected, nor contained; but containing, connecting, enlivening the whole frame; and imparting those motions, forms, qualities, and that order and symmetry, to all those transient phænomena, which we term the Course of Nature.

294. It is with our faculties as with our affections: what first seizes holds fast (sect. 264). It is a vulgar theme, that man is a compound of contrarieties, which breed a restless struggle in his nature, between flesh and spirit, the beast and the angel, earth and heaven, ever weighed down and ever bearing up. During which conflict the character fluctuates: when either side prevails, it is then fixed for vice or virtue. And life from different principles takes a different issue.—It is the same in regard to our faculties. Sense at first besets and overbears the mind. The sensible appearances are all in all: our reasonings are employed about them: our desires terminate in them: we look no farther for realities or causes; till intellect begins to dawn, and cast a ray on this shadowy scene. We then perceive the true principle of unity, identity, and existence[80]. Those things that before seemed to constitute the whole of Being, upon taking an intellectual view of things, prove to be but fleeting phantoms.

295. From the outward form of gross masses which occupy the vulgar, a curious inquirer proceeds to examine the inward structure and minute parts, and, from observing the motions in nature, to discover the laws of those motions. By the way, he frames his hypothesis and suits his language to this natural philosophy. And these fit the occasion and answer the end of a maker of experiments or mechanic, who means only to apply the powers of nature, and reduce the phænomena to rules. But if, proceeding still in his analysis and inquiry, he ascends from the sensible into the intellectual world[81], and beholds things in a new light and a new order, he will then change his system, and perceive that what he took for substances and causes are but fleeting shadows: that the mind contains all, and acts all, and is to all created beings the source

[80] *i. e.* in Spirit or Mind.

[81] *i. e.* from physical science to reflective philosophy.

of unity and identity, harmony and order, existence and stability.

296. It is neither acid, nor salt, nor sulphur, nor air, nor æther, nor visible corporeal fire (sect. 155)—much less the phantom fate or necessity—that is the real agent, but, by a certain analysis, a regular connexion and climax, we ascend through all those mediums to a glimpse of the First Mover, invisible, incorporeal, unextended, intellectual source of life and being. There is, it must be owned, a mixture of obscurity and prejudice in human speech and reasonings. This is unavoidable, since the veils of prejudice and error are slowly and singly taken off one by one. But, if there are many links in the Chain which connects the two extremes of what is grossly sensible and purely intelligible, and it seem a tedious work, by the slow helps of memory, imagination, and reason[82]—oppressed and overwhelmed, as we are, by the senses, through erroneous principles, and long ambages of words and notions—to struggle upwards into the light of truth, yet, as this gradually dawns, farther discoveries still correct the style and clear up the notions.

297. [83] The Mind, her acts and faculties, furnish a new and distinct class of objects (sect. 163, 266), from the contemplation whereof arise certain other notions, principles, and verities, so remote from, and even so repugnant to, the first prejudices which surprise the sense of mankind that they may well be excluded from vulgar speech and books, as abstract from sensible matters, and more fit for the speculation of truth, the labour and aim of a few, than for the practice of the world, or the subjects of experimental or mechanical inquiry. Nevertheless, though, perhaps, it may not be relished by some modern readers, yet the treating in physical books concerning metaphysical and divine matters can be justified by great authorities among the ancients: not to mention that he who professedly delivers the elements of a science is more obliged to method and system, and tied down to more rigorous laws, than a mere essay writer. It may, therefore, be pardoned if this rude Essay doth, by insensible transitions, draw the reader into remote

[82] 'reason' = reasoning, as in Locke and others.

[83] Mind (in antithesis to the mutable phenomena of sense), already recognised as the true unity, identity, and principle of existence, concentrates reflection upon itself, in its various relations, in this and the following sections of *Siris*.

inquiries and speculations, that were not, [[84]perhaps,] thought of either by him or by the author at first setting out.

298. There are traces of profound thought as well as primeval tradition in the Platonic, Pythagorean, Egyptian, and Chaldaic philosophy (sect. 179, 266). Men in those early days were not overlaid with languages and literature. Their minds seem to have been more exercised, and less burdened, than in later ages; and, as so much nearer the beginning of the world, to have had the advantage of patriarchal lights handed down through a few hands. It cannot be affirmed indeed (how probable soever it may seem) that Moses was that same Mochus, with whose successors, priests and prophets, Pythagoras is said to have conversed at Sidon. Yet the study of philosophy appears to be of very great antiquity and remote original; inasmuch as Timæus Locrensis, that ancient Pythagorean, author of the book concerning the Soul of the World[85], speaks of a most ancient philosophy, even in his time, ἃ πρεσβύστα φιλοσοφία, stirring up and recovering the soul from a state of ignorance to the contemplation of Divine things. And, though the books attributed to Mercurius Trismegistus were none of them wrote by him, and are allowed to contain some manifest forgeries, yet it is also allowed that they contain tenets of the ancient Egyptian philosophy, though dressed, perhaps, in a more modern garb. To account for which, Jamblichus observes that the books under his name contain indeed mercurial opinions, though often expressed in the style of the Greek philosophers; as having been translated from the Egyptian tongue into Greek.

299. The difference of Isis from Osiris (sect. 268) resembles that of the moon from the sun, of the female from the male, of *natura naturata* (as the schoolmen speak) from *natura naturans*. But Isis, though mostly taken for nature, yet (as the Pagan divinities were very fluctuating things) it sometimes signified τὸ πᾶν. And we find in Mountfaucon an Isis of the ordinary form with this inscription, Θεοῦ παντός. And in the *mensa Isiaca*, which seems to exhibit a general system of the religion and superstition of the Egyptians, Isis on her throne possesseth the centre of the table. Which may seem to signify that the universe or τὸ πᾶν

[84] Not in the early editions.

[85] *De Anima Mundi*, cap. V. § 15. But this work is of comparatively late date.

was the centre of the ancient secret religion of the Egyptians; their Isis or τὸ πᾶν comprehending both Osiris the Author of nature and his work.

300. Plato and Aristotle considered God as abstracted or distinct from the natural world[86]. But the Egyptians considered God and nature as making one whole, or all things together as making one universe. In doing which they did not exclude the intelligent mind, but considered it as containing all things. Therefore, whatever was wrong in their way of thinking, it doth not, nevertheless, imply or lead to Atheism[87].

301. The human mind is so much clogged and borne downward, by the strong and early impressions of sense (sect. 264), that it is wonderful how the ancients should have made even such a progress, and seen so far into intellectual matters, without some glimmering of a divine tradition. Whoever considers a parcel of rude savages left to themselves, how they are sunk and swallowed up in sense and prejudice, and how unqualified by their natural force to emerge from this state, will be apt to think that the first spark of philosophy was derived from heaven; and that it was (as a heathen writer expresseth it) θεοπαράδοτος φιλοσοφία.

302. The lapsed state of human kind is a thing to which the ancient philosophers were not strangers[88]. The λύσις, the φυγή, the παλιγγενεσία, shew that the Egyptians and Pythagoreans, the Platonists and Stoics, had all some notion of this doctrine, the outlines of which seem to have been sketched out in those tenets[89]. Theology and philosophy gently unbind the ligaments that chain the soul down to the earth, and assist her flight towards the sovereign Good[89]. There is an instinct or tendency of the mind upwards, which sheweth a natural endeavour to recover and raise

[86] Cf. sect. 323. This is confirmed by many passages in Plato, e. g. *Repub.* lib. VI. pp. 506, 508. See Alvia *im Philebus die persönliche Gottheit des Plato, oder Plato kein Pantheist.* Von G. F. Rettig, Bern 1866. This writer founds on passages in the *Philebus.* As regards Aristotle the case is not so clear. He seems to distinguish God from nature, but hardly to regard Deity as personal. The universe is with him eternal, and necessarily developed according to abstract ideas or ends. But see *Metaph.* XI. 6—10, and X. 7, where he identifies Metaphysics with Theology. See also Ps. *De Mundo*, VI. § 30, and Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. 7.

[87] Cf. sect. 288.

[88] *Phædo*, e. g. *Theætetus*, p. 176, *Timæus*, pp. 30, 86, &c. Evil, as Plato in various places represents, is due to apostacy from an original good.

[89] *Phædo*, pp. 82—84. So Plotinus, whose life was an endeavour to unite, by philosophy, the divine in man with the all-pervading Divinity.

ourselves from our present sensual and low condition, into a state of light, order, and purity.

303. [90] The perceptions of sense are gross: but even in the senses there is a difference. Though harmony and proportion are not objects of sense, yet the eye and the ear are organs which offer to the mind such materials by means whereof she may apprehend both the one and the other. By experiments of sense we become acquainted with the lower faculties of the soul; and from them, whether by a gradual (sect. 275) evolution or ascent, we arrive at the highest. Sense supplies images to memory. These become subjects for fancy to work upon. Reason considers and judges of the imaginations. And these acts of reason become new objects to the understanding. In this scale, each lower faculty is a step that leads to one above it. And the uppermost naturally leads to the Deity; which is rather the object of intellectual knowledge than even of the discursive faculty, not to mention the sensitive[91]. —There runs a Chain throughout the whole system of beings. In this Chain one link drags another. The meanest things are connected with the highest. The calamity therefore is neither strange nor much to be complained of, if a low sensual reader shall, from mere love of the animal life, find himself drawn on, surprised and betrayed, into some curiosity concerning the intellectual.

304. There is, according to Plato, properly no knowledge, but only opinion concerning things sensible and perishing (sect. 263, 264); not because they are naturally abstruse and involved in darkness, but because their nature and existence are uncertain, ever fleeting and changing. Or rather, because they do not in strict truth exist at all, being always generating or *in fieri*, that is,

[90] Sect. 303—319 are among the most pregnant in *Siris*, containing as they do some of Berkeley's latest thoughts about the constituent Faculties of a human consciousness; the contrast and correlation of Sense and Intellect; the fluctuating nature of Sensible Things; the innate or necessary notions of Intellect; the phenomenal dependence of Space and the whole sensible world upon Mind—all interspersed with references to Plato, Pythagoras, Aristotle, and other ancient authorities.

[91] The scale indicated in this section corresponds to the results of a psychological analysis of the constituent elements of human Intellect, viz. the sense-presentative element (*αἴσθησις*); the representative, in memory and imagination (*φαντασία*); and the universalizing, in discursive thought or inference (*διάνοια*)—all culminating in the unity of reason (*νοῦς*), and 'intellectual knowledge' properly so called—the *θεολογία* of Aristotle. Logically distinguishable, these elements are in fact inseparable, although they appear in varying proportions in different persons, and in the same person at different times. Cf. Plato, *De Repub.* lib. VII. pp. 533, 534. In his basis of theological knowledge, Berkeley here anticipates Kant.

in a perpetual flux, without any thing stable or permanent in them to constitute an object of real science. The Pythagoreans and Platonics distinguish between τὸ γιγνόμενον and τὸ ὄν, that which ever generated and that which exists. Sensible things and corporeal forms are perpetually producing and perishing, appearing and disappearing, never resting in one state, but always in motion and change; and therefore, in effect, not one being but a succession of beings: while τὸ ὄν is understood to be somewhat of an abstract or spiritual nature, and the proper object of intellectual knowledge. Therefore, as there can be no knowledge of things flowing and unstable, the opinion of Protagoras and Theætetus, that sense was science, is absurd[92]. And indeed nothing is more evident than that the apparent[93] sizes and shapes, for instance, of things are in a constant flux, ever differing as they are viewed at different distances, or with glasses more or less accurate. As for those absolute[93] magnitudes and figures, which certain Cartesians and other moderns suppose to be in things; that must seem a vain supposition, to whoever considers it is supported by no argument of reason, and no experiment of sense[94].

305. As understanding perceiveth not, that is, doth not hear, or see, or feel, so sense knoweth not: and although the mind may use both sense and fancy, as means whereby to arrive at knowledge, yet sense or soul, so far forth as sensitive, knoweth nothing. For, as it is rightly observed in the *Theætetus*[95] of Plato, science consists not in the passive perceptions, but in the reasoning upon them—τῷ περὶ ἐκείνων συλλογισμῷ.

306. In the ancient philosophy of Plato and Pythagoras, we find distinguished three sorts of objects:—In the first place, a form or species that is neither generated nor destroyed, unchangeable, invisible, and altogether imperceptible to sense, being only understood by the Intellect. A second sort there is, ever fluent and changing (sect. 292, 293), generating and perishing, appearing and vanishing; this is comprehended by Sense and Opinion. The third kind is Matter, which, as Plato teacheth, being neither an

[92] *Theætetus*, p. 154. The reference is to the *homo mensura* of Protagoras, argued against by Plato, with whom God, not man, least of all any individual man, is the measure of the universe.

[93] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 44, 80—86.

[94] Cf. sect. 271, 318.

[95] *Theætetus*, p. 186. Sense, strictly speaking, can exist only under universality, or in thought, which last therefore cannot be derived from it.

object of understanding nor of sense, is hardly to be made out by a certain spurious way of reasoning—λογισμῷ τινι νόθῳ μόγις πιστόν. (See his *Timæus*[96].) The same doctrine is contained in the Pythagoric treatise *De Anima Mundi*[97], which, distinguishing ideas, sensible things, and matter, maketh the first to be apprehended by Intellect, the second by Sense, and the last, to wit, Matter, λογισμῷ νόθῳ. Whereof Themistius the Peripatetic[98] assigns the reason. For, saith he, that act is to be esteemed spurious, whose object hath nothing positive, being only a mere privation, as silence or darkness. And such he accounteth Matter.

307. Aristotle maketh a threefold distinction of objects, according to the three speculative sciences. Physics he supposeth to be conversant about such things as have a principle of motion in themselves; Mathematics about things permanent but not abstracted; and Theology about Being abstracted and immoveable; which distinction may be seen in the ninth book of his *Metaphysics*[99]. Where by abstracted, χωριστὸν, he understands separable from corporeal beings and sensible qualities.

308. That philosopher held that the mind of man was a *tabula rasa*[1], and that there were no innate ideas. Plato, on the contrary, held original ideas in the mind; that is, notions which never were or can be in the sense, such as being, beauty, goodness, likeness, parity. Some, perhaps, may think the truth to be this:—that there are properly no *ideas*, or passive objects, in the mind but what were derived from sense: but that there are also besides these her own acts or operations; such are *notions*[2].

309. It is a maxim of the Platonic philosophy, that the soul of

[96] P. 52. Where he distinguishes this indeterminate *materia prima* from the self-existent, eternal Forms or Ideas, and from the Cosmos of determinate sensible things which results from their correlation.

[97] *De Anima Mundi*, cap. I. § 2, 6—formerly attributed to *Timæus* the Locrian. The words are:—Τὰ δὲ ξύμπαντα, ἰδέαν, ὕλαν, αἰσθητόν τε, οἷον ἔκγονον τουτέων. In the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, the concrete, sensible universe implies two abstract constituents or correlatives—Idea or Form (τὸ εἶδος), and Matter (τὸ ἄπειρον and τὸ ἕτερον of Plato, and the πρώτη ὕλη of Aristotle.) That phenomenal reality implies these two unphenomenal elements has, in one mode of statement or another, been a catholic doctrine in philosophy—and one with which Berkeley is, I think, more in sympathy in *Siris* than in his early works.

[98] P. 34. ed. Venet. 1554.

[99] See *Metaph.* lib. V. c. 1; also lib. X. c. 1.

[1] *De Anima*, lib. III. c. 4. But the *tabula rasa* of Aristotle is not inconsistent with the potential existence of Ideas or Forms, by which sensible things must be determined—of which things these Ideas and abstract Matter are the co-constituents.

[2] In this section, we have Berkeley's doctrine on the duality of Sense and Intellect—Matter and Form or Idea—and their correlation. (*His* 'ideas or passive objects' are analogous to the former; his 'notions' to the latter.) It is in a sort expressed in the *Nihil esse in intellectu quod non prius in Sensu, nisi Intellectus ipse* of Leibnitz.

man was originally furnished with native inbred notions, and stands in need of sensible occasions, not absolutely for producing them, but only for awakening, rousing, or exciting, into act what was already pre-existent, dormant, and latent in the soul; as things are said to be laid up in the memory, though not actually perceived until they happen to be called forth and brought into view by other objects. This notion seemeth somewhat different from that of innate ideas, as understood by those moderns[3] who have attempted to explode them. To understand and to be are, according to Parmenides[4], the same thing. And Plato in his seventh Letter[5] makes no difference between *νοῦς* and *ἐπιστήμη*, mind and knowledge. Whence it follows that mind, knowledge, and notions, either in habit or in act, always go together.

310. And albeit Aristotle considered the soul in its original state as a blank paper[6], yet he held it to be the proper place of forms —*τὴν ψυχὴν εἶναι τόπον εἰδῶν* (sect. 269). Which doctrine, first maintained by others, he admits, under this restriction, that it is not to be understood of the whole soul, but only of the *νοητικὴ*; as is to be seen in his third book *De Anima*[7]. Whence, according to Themistius in his commentary on that treatise, it may be inferred that all beings are in the soul. For, saith he, the forms are the beings. By the form every thing is what it is. And he adds, it is the soul that imparteth forms to matter; *τὴν ὕλην μορφῶσα ποικίλαις μορφαῖς*. Therefore they are first in the soul. He farther adds that the mind is all things, taking the forms of all things it becomes all things by intellect and sense. Alexander Aphrodisæus saith as much, affirming the mind to be all things, *κατά τε τὸ νοεῖν καὶ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι*. And this in fact is Aristotle's own doctrine, in his third book *De Anima*[8], where he also asserts, with Plato, that actual knowledge and the thing known are all one. *Τὸ δ' αὐτό ἐστιν ἡ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ἐπιστήμη τῷ πράγματι*. Whence it follows, that

[3] *e. g.* Locke.

[4] *Frag.* V. 40, *τὸ αὐτὸ νοεῖν τε καὶ εἶναι*.

[5] P. 342. The *Epistles* are not now attributed to Plato.

[6] Cf. sect. 308, 315. So Locke, 'Let us suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all character, without any ideas—how comes it to be furnished?' Essay II. 1. § 2. But Locke does not express Aristotle's distinction of potential and actual.

[7] C. 8. where Aristotle identifies the *αἰσθητικὸν* with the *αἰσθητὸν*, and the *ἐπιστημονικὸν* with the *ἐπιστητὸν*, through their forms (*εἴδη*)—the potential intellect being with him, as with Plato, the place of forms—*τόπος εἰδῶν*. For Themistius, see p. 35, ed. Venet. 1534.

[8] Cap. 7. See the preceding note. For the Aphrodisian, see *In De Anima*, p. 139 (ed. Venet. 1534).

the things are where the knowledge is, that is to say, in the mind. Or, as it is otherwise expressed, that the soul is all things. More might be said to explain Aristotle's notion, but it would lead too far.

311. [9]As to an absolute actual existence of sensible or corporeal things (sect. 264, 292, 294), it doth not seem to have been admitted either by Plato or Aristotle. In the *Theætetus*[10] we are told that if any one saith a thing is, or is made, he must withal say, for what, or of what, or in respect of what, it is, or is made; for, that any thing should exist in itself or absolutely is absurd. Agreeably to which doctrine it is also farther affirmed by Plato, that it is impossible a thing should be sweet and sweet to nobody. It must, nevertheless, be owned with regard to Aristotle, that even in his *Metaphysics* there are some expressions which seem to favour the absolute existence of corporeal things. For instance, in the eleventh book[11], speaking of corporeal sensible things, what wonder, saith he, if they never appear to us the same, no more than to sick men, since we are always changing and never remain the same ourselves? And again, he saith, sensible things, although they receive no change in themselves, do nevertheless in sick persons produce different sensations and not the same. These passages would seem to imply a distinct and absolute existence of the objects of sense.

312. But it must be observed, that Aristotle distinguisheth a twofold existence—potential and actual. It will not therefore follow that, according to Aristotle, because a thing is, it must actually exist. This is evident from the eighth book[12] of his

[9] In sect. 311—319, Berkeley, in consideration of the transitoriness of the ideas or phenomena of sense, and the implied existence of mind on which they depend, once more returns to the favourite problem of his youth—the meaning of *existence* when predicated of the sensible world and of space. He summons Plato and Aristotle as witnesses to the truth, that their *actual* (if not their potential) existence is relative, *i. e.* dependent upon a percipient; that unperceived Matter and unperceived Space are mere abstractions. Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. 73—81. 'Sensible things' are of course not to be confounded with the ἄπειρον of Plato, or the ὕλη of Aristotle.

[10] P. 160.

[11] The passage is in lib. X. (XI.) cap. 6, where Aristotle argues against Protagoras by name, and in behalf of permanence in sensible things.

[12] C. 3, in which potential (ἐν δυνάμει) is distinguished from actual existence (ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ, or ἐν ἐντελεχείᾳ); and the Megaric theory, limiting existence to the latter, is identified with the sceptical subjectivity of Protagoras. With Berkeley, when sensible things exist ἐν δυνάμει, they exist in the ever-living power and knowledge of God. But what is to be understood by this sort of existence? What is divine knowledge? Is existence in divine knowledge analogous

Metaphysics, where he animadverts on the Megaric philosophers, as not admitting a possible existence distinct from the actual: from whence, saith he, it must follow, that there is nothing cold, or hot, or sweet, or any sensible thing at all, where there is no perception. He adds that, in consequence of that Megaric doctrine, we can have no sense but while we actually exert it: we are blind when we do not see, and therefore both blind and deaf several times in a day.

313. The ἐντελέχειαι πρῶται of the Peripatetics, that is, the sciences, arts, and habits, were by them distinguished from the acts or ἐντελέχειαι δεύτεραι, and supposed to exist in the mind, though not exerted or put into act[13]. This seems to illustrate the manner in which Socrates, Plato, and their followers, conceive innate notions to be in the soul of man (sect. 309). It was the Platonic doctrine[14], that human souls or minds descended from above, and were sowed in generation; that they were stunned, stupified, and intoxicated by this descent and immersion into animal nature; and that the soul, in this ὀνείρωξις or slumber, forgets her original notions, which are smothered and oppressed by many false tenets and prejudices of sense. Insomuch that Proclus[15] compares the soul, in her descent invested with growing prejudices, to Glaucus diving to the bottom of the sea, and there contracting divers coats of seaweed, coral, and shells, which stick close to him, and conceal his true shape.

314. Hence, according to this philosophy, the mind of man is so restless to shake off that slumber, to disengage and emancipate herself from those prejudices and false opinions that so straitly beset and cling to her, to rub off those covers that disguise her original form, and to regain her primeval state and first notions: hence that perpetual struggle to recover the lost region of light, that ardent thirst and endeavour after truth and intellectual ideas, which she would neither seek to attain, nor rejoice in, nor know when attained, except she had some prenotion or anticipation of

to existence in a human intellect, with its successive states? Berkeley hardly recognises this question, and its difficulties.

[13] The *acquisition* of a habit implies previous potentiality, as well as the *exertion* of the habit. Hence the first and second energies of the Peripatetics.

[14] *Timæus*, p. 52.

[15] *Comment. in Alcib. Plat. Prim.*—De Anima et Dæmone. A Latin edition by Ficinus, consisting of 'excerpta,' appeared in 1497, at Venice.

them, and they had lain innate and dormant, like habits and sciences in the mind, or things laid up, which are called out and roused by recollection or reminiscence. So that learning seemeth in effect reminiscence[16].

315. The Peripatetics themselves distinguish between reminiscence and mere memory. Themistius observes that the best memories commonly go with the worst parts; but that reminiscence is most perfect in the most ingenious minds. And, notwithstanding the *tabula rasa* of Aristotle (sect. 308), yet some of his followers have undertaken to make him speak Plato's sense. Thus Plutarch the Peripatetic teacheth, as agreeable to his master's doctrine, that learning is reminiscence, and that the νοῦς καθ' ἕξιν is in children. Simplicius also, in his commentary on the third book of Aristotle, περὶ ψυχῆς, speaketh of a certain interior reason in the soul, acting of itself, and originally full of its own proper notions, πλήρης ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τῶν οἰκείων γνωσίων[17].

316. And, as the Platonic philosophy supposed intellectual notions to be originally inexistent, or innate in the soul (sect. 309, 314), so likewise it supposed sensible qualities to exist (though not originally) in the soul, and there only[18]. Socrates saith to Theætetus[19], You must not think the white colour that you see is in any thing without your eyes, or in your eyes, or in any place at all. And in the *Timæus*[20], Plato teacheth that the figure and motion of the particles of fire dividing the parts of our bodies produce that painful sensation we call heat. And Plotinus, in the sixth book of his second Ennead[21], observes that heat and other qualities are not qualities in the things themselves, but acts: that heat is not a quality, but act in the fire: that fire is not really what we per-

[16] On the Platonic doctrine, we *remember*, by association, the contingencies of past sense-experience; we are *reminiscent* of the 'intellectual ideas' or necessities of Intellect, as these are evolved in reflective consciousness by dialectic, which thus discovers our original participation in the Supreme Reason.

[17] In connection with sect. 315, see Themistius, *In De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, fol. 97 (ed. Venet. 1534); and Simplicius, *In De Anima*, lib. III. c. 9. To Simplicius, who lived in the sixth century, we owe some of the most valuable expositions of Aristotle, especially the *De Anima*. He attempts to reconcile Aristotle with Plato. 'Plutarch the Peripatetic' seems to be Plutarch son of Nestorius, the Neo-Platonist, who is said to have written a commentary, now lost, on the *De Anima*. With Aristotle, reminiscence (ἀνάμνησις) implies, I think, rational volition, but not all that Plato symbolised by his pre-existence.

[18] 'there' does not imply locality—any *spacial* relation. Cf. sect. 329. The forms of knowledge are involved in all sensation that is conceivable. Pure sensation is pure negation. The νοῦς is the *locus principiorum*—'the place of forms.'

[19] *Theætetus*, pp. 184, 185.

[20] Pp. 61, 62.

[21] Cap. 3.

ceive in the qualities, light, heat, and colour. From all which it is plain that whatever real things they suppose to exist independent of the soul, those were neither sensible things nor clothed with sensible qualities.

317. Neither Plato nor Aristotle by Matter, ὕλη[22], understood corporeal substance, whatever the moderns may understand by that word. To them certainly it signified no positive actual being. Aristotle[23] describes it as made up of negatives, having neither quantity, nor quality, nor essence. And not only the Platonists and Pythagoreans, but also the Peripatetics themselves declare it to be known, neither by sense, nor by any direct and just reasoning, but only by some spurious or adulterine method, as hath been observed before. Simon Portius[24], a famous Peripatetic of the sixteenth century, denies it to be any substance at all, for, saith he, *Nequit per se subsistere, quia sequeretur, id quod non est in actu esse in actu.* If Jamblichus[25] may be credited, the Egyptians supposed Matter so far from including aught of substance or essence, that, according to them, God produced it by a separation from all substance, essence, or being, ἀπὸ οὐσιότητος ἀποχισθείσης ὑλότητος. That Matter is actually nothing, but potentially all things, is the doctrine of Aristotle, Theophrastus, and all the ancient Peripatetics[26].

318. According to those philosophers, Matter is only a *pura potentia*, a mere possibility. But Anaximander, successor to Thales, is represented as having thought the supreme Deity to be infinite Matter. Nevertheless, though Plutarch[27] calleth it Matter, yet it was simply τὸ ἄπειρον, which means no more than infinite or indefinite.—And although the moderns teach that Space is real and infinitely extended, yet, if we consider that it is no intellectual notion[28], nor yet perceived by any of our senses, we shall perhaps be inclined to think with Plato in his *Timæus*, that this also is the

[22] τὸ ἄπειρον, or τὸ ἕτερον of Plato—according to Hegel, a necessitated 'otherness.' What is popularly meant by matter—sensible things—is of course not to be confounded with the formless Matter of Aristotle—that dark, undefinable condition of knowing this ordered and reasonable sensible world.

[23] *Metaph.* lib. VI. c. 3.

[24] See the *De Rerum Naturalium Principiis* (1551), lib. I. c. 11, of Simon Porta or Portius—a Neapolitan Professor of Philosophy at Pisa, and the most famous of the pupils of Pomponatius.

[25] *De Ægyptiorum Mysteriis.* See the paraphrase of Ficinus.

[26] *Metaph.* lib. VI. c. 7. 15, lib. VII. c. 1, *De Anima*, lib. III. c. 5.

[27] *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 3.

[28] *i. e.* not due to any 'act or operation of the soul'—as Berkeley means by 'notion' (sect. 308). With him *notions* and *ideas*

result of λογισμὸς νόθος, or spurious reasoning, and a kind of waking dream. Plato observes that we dream, as it were, when we think of place, and believe it necessary that whatever exists should exist in some place. Which place or space (sect. 250, 270), he also observes, is μετ' ἀναισθησίας ἁπτὸν, that is, to be felt as darkness is seen, or silence heard, being a mere privation.

319. If any one should think to infer the reality or actual being of Matter from the modern tenet—that gravity is always proportionable to the quantity of matter, let him but narrowly scan the modern demonstration of that tenet, and he will find it to be a vain circle, concluding in truth no more than this—that gravity is proportionable to weight, that is, to itself. Since Matter is conceived only as defect and mere possibility; and since God is absolute perfection and act; it follows there is the greatest distance and opposition imaginable between God and Matter. Insomuch that a material God would be altogether inconsistent.

320. [29] The force that produces, the intellect that orders, the goodness that perfects all things is the supreme Being. Evil, defect, negation, is not the object of God's creative power. From motion the Peripatetics trace out a first immoveable Mover. The Platonics make God author of all good, author of no evil, and unchangeable[30]. According to Anaxagoras, there was a confused mass of all things in one chaos; but mind supervening, ἐπελθὼν, distinguished and divided them. Anaxagoras, it seems, ascribed the motive faculty to mind[31]; which mind some subsequent philosophers have accurately discriminated from soul and life, ascribing to it the sole faculty of intellection.

321. But still God was supposed the first Agent, the source and original of all things; which he produceth, not occasionally or instrumentally, but with actual and real efficacy. Thus the treatise

are the elements of knowledge and existence. In his early philosophy, he concerned himself chiefly with the former; in *Siris* rather with the latter. In his later as in his earlier philosophy he teaches that pure Space, like pure Matter, is a pure negation —actualized in sensible extension (visible or tangible)—created—and dependent on mind as the formal and efficient cause. For Plato, see *Timæus*, p. 52, and cf. sect. 306.

[29] Sect. 320—329, in accumulating authorities favourable to the reference of all changes ultimately to spiritual agency, suggest for contemplation the manner of the relation of the system of sensible things to Supreme Being; also the elasticity of the theistic conception, so adapted to theological eclecticism, and to tolerance of diversity in theological expression. They revert to the doctrine of an *anima mundi*.

[30] *Timæus*, pp. 29, 30.

[31] *i. e. νοῦς*. See Diogen. Laert. lib. II. c. 6; also Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit.* lib. I. c. 3.

De Secretiore Parte Divinæ Sapientiæ secundum Ægyptios, in the tenth book, saith of God, that he is not only the first Agent, but also that he it is who truly acts or creates, *qui vere efficit*.

322. Varro, Tully, and St. Augustin, understand the soul to be *vis*, the power or force that acts, moves, enlivens. Now although, in our conception, *vis*, or spirit, might be distinguished from mind, it would not thence follow that it acts blindly or without mind, or that it is not closely connected with intellect. If Plutarch[32] is to be trusted in his account of the opinions of philosophers, Thales held the mind of the world to be God; Democritus held the soul of the world to be an igniform deity (sect. 166, 168, 277); Pythagoras taught that God was the monad and the good, or τ' ἀγαθὸν; Socrates also and Plato pronounced him to be τὸ ἓν (sect. 287), the single, self-originate one, essentially good. Each of which appellations and forms of speech directly tends to and determines in Mind, εἰς τὸν νοῦν σπεύδει, saith Plutarch.

323. Whence that author concludes, that, in the sense of those philosophers, God is a Mind, χωριστὸν εἶδος—not an abstract idea compounded of inconsistencies, and prescinded from all real things, as some moderns understand abstraction[33]; but a really existing Spirit, distinct or separate from all sensible and corporeal beings. And although the Stoics are represented as holding a corporeal deity, or that the very system of the world is God, yet it is certain they did not, at bottom, dissent from the forementioned doctrine; inasmuch as they supposed the world to be an animal (sect. 276, 279), consisting of soul or mind, as well as body.

324. This notion was derived from the Pythagoreans, who held the world, as Timæus Locrus[34] teacheth, to be one perfect animal, endued with soul and reason: but then they believed it to have been generated: whereas the Stoics looked on the world as the supreme God, including therein mind or intellect. For the elementary fire, or, if one may so speak, the animal spirit of the world, seemeth, according to them, to have been the vehicle of the [[35]soul (sect. 277, 284), the vehicle of intellect, or νοῦς]; since

[32] *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 7; also Arist. *De Anima*, lib. I. c. 2.

[33] Cf. *Principles of Human Knowledge*, Introd. sect. 10. See Arist. *Metaph.* lib. XI. c. 7, 12.

[34] *De Anima Mundi*, cap. 2. See also Ps.-Plutarch, *De Placit. Philos.* lib. I. c. 11. Cf. sect. 153 of *Siris*.

[35] 'soul of the world (sect. 277, 284), and the soul itself the vehicle of intellect or νοῦς'—in the first edition.

they styled the Divinity πῦρ νοερὸν (sect. 272), or intellectual fire.

325. The Egyptians, if we may credit the Hermaic writings, maintained God to be all things, not only actual, but possible. He is styled by them, That which is made and that which is unmade. And therein it is said, Shall I praise thee for those things thou hast made manifest, or for the things thou hast hidden? Therefore, in their sense, to manifest was to create; the things created having been before hidden in God.

326. Now, whether the *νοῦς* be abstracted from the sensible world, and considered by itself, as distinct from, and presiding over, the created system; or whether the whole Universe, including mind together with the mundane body, is conceived to be God (sect. 300), and the creatures to be partial manifestations of the Divine essence—there is no Atheism in either case[36], whatever misconceptions there may be; so long as mind or intellect is understood to preside over, govern, and conduct, the whole frame of things. And this was the general prevailing opinion among the philosophers.

327. Nor if any one, with Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*[37], should deny that God knows anything without himself—seeing that God comprehends all things—could this be justly pronounced an atheistical opinion. Nor even was the following notion of the same author to be accounted Atheism, to wit that there are some things beneath the knowledge of God, as too mean, base, and vile; however wrong this notion may be, and unworthy of the Divine perfection.

328. Might we not conceive that God may be said to be All in divers senses;—as he is the cause and origin of all beings; as the *νοῦς* is the *νοητὰ*, a doctrine both of Platonics and Peripatetics (sect. 309, 310); as the *νοῦς* is the place of all forms; and as it is the same which comprehends and orders (sect. 320) and sustains the whole mundane system. Aristotle declares that the Divine force or influence permeates the entire universe (sect. 173), and that what the pilot is in a ship, the driver in a chariot, the precentor in a choir, the law in a city, the general in an army, the

[36] Cf. sect. 287, 300. We find similar language in Justin Martyr, and other Fathers. So too Cudworth.

[37] Lib. XI. c. 6—9.

same God is in the world. This he amply sets forth in his book *De Mundo*[38]; a treatise which, having been anciently ascribed to him, ought not to be set aside from the difference of style; which (as Patricius[38] rightly observes), being in a letter to a king, might well be supposed to differ from the other dry and crabbed parts of his writings.

329. And, although there are some expressions to be met with in the philosophers, even of the Platonic and Aristotelic sects, which speak of God as mixing with, or pervading all nature and all the elements; yet this must be explained by force and not by extension, which was never attributed to the mind (sect. 290, 293, 297, 319), either by Aristotle or Plato. This they always affirmed to be incorporeal: and, as Plotinus remarks[39], incorporeal things are distant each from other not by place, but (to use his expression) by *alterity*.

330. These disquisitions will probably seem dry and useless to such readers as are accustomed to consider only sensible objects. The employment of the mind on things purely intellectual is to most men irksome; whereas the sensitive powers, by constant use, acquire strength. Hence, the objects of sense more forcibly affect us (sect. 264, 294), and are too often counted the chief good. For these things men fight, cheat, and scramble. Therefore, in order to tame mankind, and introduce a sense of virtue, the best human means is to exercise their understanding, to give them a glimpse of another world, superior to the sensible, and, while they take pains to cherish and maintain the animal life, to teach them not to neglect the intellectual.

331. [40]Prevailing studies are of no small consequence to a state, the religion, manners, and civil government of a country ever taking some bias from its philosophy, which affects not only the minds of its professors and students, but also the opinions of

[38] Cap. VI. § 34. As already said, the *De Mundo* is not now accepted as genuine. But see the reference to it in Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, B. IV. c. 26. Patricius (1529—97) was one of the Christian Platonists of his day, and a critical expositor of Aristotle; see his *Discussiones Peripateticæ*, where he refers to the *De Mundo*.

[39] *Third Ennead*, lib. VI. c. 15—'by alterity,' τῇ ἑτερότητι—a suggestive term.

[40] The eloquent appeal on behalf of a Spiritual, as contrasted with the, then and now, prevalent Corpuscularian and Mechanical, or Materialistic Philosophy, and the eloge of Plato, contained in sect. 331, 332, is the prelude to the exposition of Platonic and Neoplatonic speculation of Supreme or Divine Being, which occupies the remaining sections of *Siris*.

all the better sort, and the practice of the whole people, remotely and consequentially indeed, though not inconsiderably. Have not the polemic and scholastic philosophy been observed to produce controversies in law and religion? And have not Fatalism and Sadducism gained ground, during the general passion for the corpuscularian and mechanical philosophy, which hath prevailed for about a century? This, indeed, might usefully enough have employed some share of the leisure and curiosity of inquisitive persons. But when it entered the seminaries of learning as a necessary accomplishment, and most important part of education, by engrossing men's thoughts, and fixing their minds so much on corporeal objects, and the laws of motion, it hath, however undesignedly, indirectly, and by accident, yet not a little indisposed them for spiritual, moral, and intellectual matters. Certainly had the philosophy of Socrates and Pythagoras prevailed in this age, among those who think themselves too wise to receive the dictates of the Gospel, we should not have seen interest take so general and fast hold on the minds of men, nor public spirit reputed to be γενναῖαν εὐήθειαν, a generous folly, among those who are reckoned to be the most knowing as well as the most getting part of mankind[41].

332. It might very well be thought serious trifling to tell my readers that the greatest men had ever a high esteem for Plato; whose writings are the touchstone[42] of a hasty and shallow mind; whose philosophy has been the admiration of ages; which supplied patriots, magistrates, and lawgivers to the most flourishing states, as well as fathers to the Church, and doctors to the schools. Albeit in these days the depths of that old learning are rarely fathomed; and yet it were happy for these lands if our young nobility and gentry, instead of modern maxims, would imbibe the notions of the great men of antiquity. But, in these freethinking times, many an empty head is shook at Aristotle and Plato, as well as at the Holy Scriptures. And the writings of those celebrated ancients are by most men treated on a foot with the dry and barbarous lucubrations of the schoolmen. It may be modestly presumed there are not many among us, even of those who are

[41] Cf. *Alciphron, Dial.* I. sect. 12.

[42] Sir J. Mackintosh applies this term to Berkeley's own philosophy. 'His immaterialism is chiefly valuable as a *touchstone* of metaphysical sagacity' (*Diss.* p. 208). The expression was probably suggested by *Siris*.

the better sort, who have more sense, virtue, and love of country than Cicero, who in a Letter to Atticus[43] could not r exclaiming, O *Socrates et Socratici viri! nunquam vobis n referam.* Would to God many of our countrymen had ne obligations to those Socratic writers! Certainly, where ople are well educated, the art of piloting a state is best d from the writings of Plato. But among bad men, void of ine and education, Plato, Pythagoras, and Aristotle them- were they living, could do but little good. Plato hath a very humourous and instructive picture of such a state; I shall not transcribe for certain reasons. But whoever mind may see it, in the seventy-eighth page of the second of Aldus's edition of Plato's works[44].

. Proclus, in the first book[45] of his Commentary on the ogy of Plato, observes that, as in the mysteries, those who itiated, at first meet with manifold and multiform gods, but entered and thoroughly initiated they receive the Divine nation and participate the very Deity; in like manner, if ul look abroad, she beholds the shadows and images of : but returning into herself she unravels and beholds her essence: at first she seemeth only to behold herself; but ; penetrated farther she discovers the mind. And again, urther advancing into the innermost sanctuary of the soul, ntemplates the θεῶν γένος. And this, he saith, is the most nt of all human acts, in the silence and repose of the es of the soul to tend upwards to the very Divinity; to ch and be closely joined with that which is ineffable and or to all beings. When come so high as the first principle, ds her journey and rests. Such is the doctrine of Proclus.

. But Socrates in the First Alcibiades[46] teacheth, on the other

st. XIV. 9.

e passage here referred to is in *Re-* VI. pp. 487 E—489 D, Εἶεν, εἶπον γλάθαμεν, in which the position of sopher in the state is likened to that ible steersman, among a rebellious Berkeley's reason for not quoting it ppose, simply the length of the pas- : could hardly have fancied it admit- rsonal application to himself as a phi- , and the government of the time.

. 3. We have here a rough version of the original, according to which all things are potentially in the human soul, which is thus capable of knowing all things.

[46] P. 33. The passage in Proclus, quoted in the preceding section, is a commentary on this part of the *First Alcibiades*, where Socrates has it that in knowing the reasonable soul and its ideas we know God, and in thus knowing God know ourselves. Plato maintains the essential divinity of the reasonable soul. The *First Alcibiades*, Platonic in its tone, is by many regarded as spurious.

hand, that the contemplation of God is the proper means to know or understand our own soul. As the eye, saith he, looking steadfastly at the visive part or pupil of another eye, beholds itself, even so the soul beholds and understands herself, while she contemplates the Deity, which is wisdom and virtue, or like thereunto. In the Phædon[47], Socrates speaks of God as being τ' ἀγαθὸν and τὸ δέον (sect. 260, 322); Plotinus[48] represents God as order; Aristotle[49] as law.

335. It may seem, perhaps, to those who have been taught to discourse about substratums, more reasonable and pious, to attribute to the Deity a more substantial being than the notional entities of wisdom, order, law, virtue, or goodness, which being only complex ideas, framed and put together by the understanding, are its own creatures, and have nothing substantial, real, or independent in them. But it must be considered that, in the Platonic system, order, virtue, law, goodness, and wisdom are not creatures of the soul of man, but innate and originally existent therein, not as an accident in a substance, but as light to enlighten, and as a guide to govern. In Plato's style, the term *idea* doth not merely signify an inert inactive object of the understanding, but is used as synonymous with αἴτιον and ἀρχὴ, cause and principle[50]. According to that philosopher, goodness, beauty, virtue, and such like are not figments of the mind, nor mere mixed modes, nor yet abstract ideas in the modern sense, but the most real beings, intellectual and unchangeable: and therefore more real than the fleeting, transient objects of sense (sect. 306), which, wanting stability, cannot be subjects of science (sect. 264, 266, 297), much less of intellectual knowledge.

336. By Parmenides, Timæus, and Plato a distinction was made, as hath been observed already, between *genitum* and *ens*. The former sort is always generating or *in fieri* (sect. 304, 306), but never exists; because it never continues the same, being in a constant change, ever perishing and producing. By *entia* they

[47] *Phædo*, p. 80.

[48] *Sixth Ennead*, lib. VIII. ad finem; also *Fifth Ennead*, lib. V—10 which book Berkeley makes much allusion.

[49] *De Mundo*, cap. VI. § 36—not now assigned to Aristotle.

[50] Note here the contrast between the 'ideas' or 'phænomena' of Berkeley, and the Ideas or Forms of Plato, in which Deity is manifested; without which last, according to Plato, the material universe could not actually exist, by participation in which the relations of sensible things are necessarily determined, and in which, as principles, speculative inquiry finds satisfaction. As such, Platonic Ideas are regarded as *Causes*.

understand things remote from sense, invisible and intellectual, which never changing are still the same, and may therefore be said truly to exist: οὐσία, which is generally translated substance, but more properly essence, was not thought to belong to things sensible and corporeal, which have no stability; but rather to intellectual ideas, though discerned with more difficulty, and making less impression on a mind stupefied and immersed in animal life, than gross objects that continually beset and solicit our senses.

337. The most refined human intellect, exerted to its utmost reach, can only seize some imperfect glimpses of the Divine Ideas (sect. 313, 330), abstracted from all things corporeal, sensible, and imaginable. Therefore Pythagoras and Plato treated them in a mysterious manner, concealing rather than exposing them to vulgar eyes; so far were they from thinking that those abstract things, although the most real, were the fittest to influence common minds, or become principles of knowledge, not to say duty and virtue, to the generality of mankind.

338. Aristotle[51] and his followers have made a monstrous representation of the Platonic ideas; and some of Plato's own school have said very odd things concerning them. But if that philosopher himself was not read only, but studied also with care, and made his own interpreter, I believe the prejudice that now lies against him would soon wear off (sect. 309, 313), or be even converted into a high esteem for those exalted notions and fine hints that sparkle and shine throughout his writings; which seem to contain not only the most valuable learning of Athens and Greece, but also a treasure of the most remote traditions and early science of the East.

339. In the *Timæus*[52] of Plato mention is made of ancient persons, authors of traditions, and the offspring of the gods. It is very remarkable that, in the account of the creation contained in the same piece[52], it is said that God was pleased with his work, and that the night is placed before the day. The more we think, the

[51] See, for instance, Aristotle's *Metaph.* lib. I. c. 9, and the interpretation put by Aristotle, in various well-known passages, upon the Platonic doctrine of the self-existence and absoluteness of Ideas—the formal causes and eternal necessities of the universe. See also *Metaph.* XII. 4. The substantial and causal existence of Universal Forms Aristotle denied. The subject cannot be discussed here.

[52] Pp. 23 and 37. Cf. sect. 298, 301, for illustrations of Berkeley's reverence for ancient philosophy, as a repository of the original Divine Revelation. So Cudworth, and afterwards the Chevalier Ramsay.

more difficult shall we find it to conceive, how mere man, grown up in the vulgar habits of life, and weighed down by sensuality, should ever be able to arrive at science, without some tradition (sect. 298, 301, 302) or teaching, which might either sow the seeds of knowledge, or call forth and excite those latent seeds that were originally sown in the soul.

340. Human souls in this low situation, bordering on mere animal life, bear the weight and see through the dusk of a gross atmosphere, gathered from wrong judgments daily passed, false opinions daily learned, and early habits of an older date than either judgment or opinion. Through such a medium the sharpest eye cannot see clearly (sect. 292, 293, 294). And if by some extraordinary effort the mind should surmount this dusky region, and snatch a glimpse of pure light, she is soon drawn backwards, and depressed by the heaviness of the animal nature to which she is chained. And if again she chanceth, amidst the agitation of wild fancies and strong affections, to spring upwards, a second relapse speedily succeeds into this region of darkness and dreams.

341[53]. Nevertheless, as the mind gathers strength by repeated acts, we should not despond, but continue to exert the prime and flower of our faculties, still recovering, and reaching on, and struggling, into the upper region, whereby our natural weakness and blindness may be in some degree remedied, and a taste attained of truth and intellectual life.—Beside the constant prevailing opinion of the greatest men of antiquity, that there is both an universal Spirit, author of life and motion, and an universal Mind, enlightening and ordering all things, it was a received tenet among them, that there is also τὸ ἓν or τ' ἀγαθὸν (sect. 322), which they looked on as the *Fons Deitatis*, the first hypostasis in the Divinity.

342. THE ONE, or τὸ ἓν, being immutable and indivisible, always the same and entire, was therefore thought to exist truly and originally, and other things only so far as they are one and the same, by participation of τὸ ἓν. This gives unity, stability,

[53] The ancient, especially Platonic and Neoplatonic idea of Deity, is entered on in this section. What created or finite personality means is also referred to. This last—an empirical Ego in itself, and in its relation to Absolute Ego, as well as to nature, including the sentient organism—Berkeley here, as elsewhere, but slightly touches. The speculation of the ONE belongs eminently to the Pre-Socratic Parmenides, and to Plotinus and Proclus. In this and the following sections, Berkeley, like other writers of his time, mixes up the opinions of Plato with those of earlier and later philosophers.

reality, to things (sect. 264, 306). Plato describes God, as ıes[54], from his being. According to both, God is He who truly ὁ ὄντως ὤν. Change and division were esteemed defects or Evil scatters, divides, destroys. Good, on the contrary, luceth concord and union, assembles, combines, perfects, and erves entire. The several beings which compose the universe parts of the same system; they combine to carry on one end, perfect one whole. And this aptness and concurrence there- › furnishes the partial particular idea of Good in the distinct tures. Hence it might have come to pass that τ' ἀγαθὸν and ν were regarded as one and the same.

43. Light and sight (saith Plato in the sixth book[55] of his Re- lic) are not the sun: even so truth and knowledge are not the d itself, although they approach thereunto. And again, what the is in a visible place with respect to sight and things seen, that e is τ' ἀγαθὸν or Good in an intelligible place, with respect to erstanding and things understood. Therefore the Good or One ot the light that enlightens, but the source of that light.

44. Every moment produceth some change in the parts of visible creation. Something is added, or diminished, or red, in essence, quantity, quality, or habitude. Wherefore all erated beings were said by the ancients to be in a perpetual (sect. 304, 336). And that which, on a confused and general v, seems one single constant being, shall upon a nearer inspec- ı appear a continued series of different beings. But God remains ever one and the same. Therefore God alone exists. This the doctrine of Heraclitus, Plato, and other ancients.

45. It is the opinion of Plato and his followers[56] that in the of man, prior and superior to intellect, there is somewhat of igher nature, by virtue of which we are one; and that by ıns of our one or unit, we are most closely joined to the

Exodus III. 14. Modern critics connect ıame Jehovah etymologically with *be- ıg* rather than with absolute, immutable g—with historical development, in short; ›rderly historical development, animated pirit, a unity in necessary trinity, is eley's implied conception of τὸ πᾶν.

P. 508. This section of *Siris* is an description of what Plato says in the blic, though I do not think he says ssly that the One and the Good are ame, unless this may be inferred from the end of the second book of the Republic, and the end of the Philebus.

[56] In this and the preceding section there is a good deal more than is said distinctly in Plato. Proclus, *In Theol. Plat.*, lib. II., cap. 4—12, expounds and defends Plato's doctrine of the ONE, referring especially to passages in the Parmenides, Republic, Philebus, and Sophista. These chapters seem to have been in Berkeley's view in this and the three foregoing sections.

Deity. And, as by our intellect we touch the Divine Intellect, even so by our τὸ ἓν or unit, the very flower of our essence, as Proclus[57] expresseth it, we touch the first One.

346. According to the Platonic philosophy, *ens* and *unum* are the same. And consequently our minds participate so far of existence as they do of unity. But it should seem that *personality* is the indivisible centre of the soul or mind, which is a monad so far forth as she is a person. Therefore Person is really that which exists, inasmuch as it participates the Divine unity. In man the monad or indivisible is the αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτὸ, the self-same self, or very self; a thing in the opinion of Socrates, much and narrowly to be inquired into and discussed, to the end that, knowing ourselves, we may know what belongs to ourselves and to our happiness.

347. Upon mature reflection, the person or mind[58] of all created beings seemeth alone indivisible, and to partake most of unity. But sensible things are rather considered as one than truly so, they being in a perpetual flux or succession, ever differing and various. Nevertheless, all things together may be considered as one universe (sect. 287, 288), one by the connexion, relation, and order of its parts, which is the work of mind, whose unit is, by Platonics, supposed a participation of the first τὸ ἓν.

348. Socrates, in the *Theætetus*[59] of Plato, speaketh of two parties of philosophers—the ῥέοντες, and οἱ τοῦ ὅλου στασιῶται—the flowing philosophers who held all things to be in a perpetual flux, always generating and never existing; and those others who maintained the universe to be fixed and immovable. The difference seems to have been this, that Heraclitus, Protagoras, Empedocles, and in general those of the former sect, considered things sensible and natural; whereas Parmenides and his party considered τὸ πᾶν, not as the sensible but as the intelligible world (sect. 293, 294, 295), abstracted from all sensible things.

349. In effect, if we mean by *things* the sensible objects, these, it is evident, are always flowing; but if we mean things purely intelligible, then we may say on the other hand, with equal truth,

[57] *In Theol. Plat.*, lib. III. c. 4. In the first part of this book, Proclus speculates on the manner in which souls participate in the superessential unity.

[58] Our own continued personality or personal identity, revealed in memory, is, with Berkeley, the type of *sameness* and *unity*—that from which we originally derive the meaning of these terms, as it is also our concrete exemplar of substance and cause.

[59] P. 181. On the 'flowing philosophers' cf. Cudworth's *Eternal Morality*, pp. 242, &c.

that they are immovable and unchangeable. So that those who thought the Whole, or τὸ πᾶν, to be ἓν ἑστὼς, a fixed or permanent One, seem to have understood the Whole of real beings; which in their sense was only the intellectual world, not allowing reality of being to things not permanent.

350. The displeasure of some readers may perhaps be incurred, by surprising them into certain reflections and inquiries for which they have no curiosity. But perhaps some others may be pleased to find a dry subject varied by digressions, traced through remote inferences, and carried into ancient times, whose hoary maxims (sect. 298, 301), scattered in this Essay, are not proposed as principles, but barely as hints to awaken and exercise the inquisitive reader, on points not beneath the attention of the ablest men. Those great men, Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, the most consummate in politics, who founded states, or instructed princes, or wrote most accurately on public government, were at the same time most acute at all abstracted and sublime speculations; the clearest light being ever necessary to guide the most important actions. And, whatever the world thinks, he who hath not much meditated upon God, the human mind, and the *summum bonum*, may possibly make a [[60]thriving] earthworm, but will most indubitably make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman.

351. According to the nice metaphysics of those ancient philosophers, τὸ ἓν[61], being considered as what was first and simplest in the Deity, was prescinded even from entity, to which it was thought prior and superior; and is therefore by the Platonics styled super-essential. And in the Parmenides it is said, τὸ ἓν doth not exist[62]; which might seem to imply a negation of the Divine Being. The truth is, Zeno and Parmenides argued that a thing existing in time was older and younger than itself; therefore the

[60] 'able'—in first edition.

[61] The contemplation of τὸ ἓν, or that ineffable Hypostasis which is first and simplest in Deity, suggests further speculation on Divine Being, as involving Reason and Life, as well as the former Hypostasis. This introduces the (so-called) Platonic Trinity, after the consideration of which *Siris* concludes, in sections of exquisite beauty. Cf. Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, B. IV. c. 36. That Plato himself taught a doctrine of the Trinity of Hypostases is now generally disallowed, and has long been, even in England, e. g. by Dr. Cæsar Morgan, in his *Investigation of the Trinity of Plato and of Philo-Judæus* (1795).

[62] This is one of the assumptions of Parmenides, in the part where he unfolds his doctrine of the One in demonstrations and counter demonstrations. This dialogue appears to be a sort of dialectical exercise, not containing the real views of Parmenides or Plato.

constant immutable τὸ ἓν did not exist in time: and if not in time, then in none of the differences of time past, present, or to come; therefore we cannot say that it was, is, or will be. But, nevertheless, it is admitted, in the same Parmenides, that τὸ νῦν is everywhere present to τὸ ἓν; that is, instead of a temporary succession of moments, there is one eternal now, or *punctum stans*, as it is termed by the schoolmen.

352. The simplicity of τὸ ἓν (the Father in the Pythagoric and Platonic Trinity) is conceived such as to exclude intellect or mind, to which it is supposed prior; and that hath created a suspicion of Atheism in this opinion: for, saith the learned Doctor Cudworth[63], shall we say that the first Hypostasis or Person is ἄνους and ἄλογος, senseless and irrational, and altogether devoid of mind and understanding? or would not this be to introduce a kind of mysterious Atheism? To which it may be answered, that whoever acknowledgeth the universe to be made and governed by an eternal mind cannot be justly deemed an Atheist (sect. 154, 276, 279, 287). And this was the tenet of those ancient philosophers. In the Platonic doctrine, the generation of the νοῦς or λόγος was not contingent but necessary, not temporary but from everlasting. There never was a time supposed wherein τὸ ἓν subsisted without intellect; the priority having been understood only as a priority of order or conception, but not a priority of age. Therefore, the maintaining a distinction of priority between τὸ ἓν and νοῦς doth not infer that the one ever existed without the other. It follows, therefore, that the Father or τὸ ἓν may, in a certain sense, be said to be ἄνους without Atheism, or without destroying the notion of a Deity; any more than it would destroy the notion of a human soul, if we should conceive a distinction between self and intellect, or intellect and life[64]. To which we

[63] 'Shall we say that the First Hypostasis or Person in the Platonic Trinity (if not the Christian also) is ἄνους or ἄλογος, senseless and irrational, and altogether devoid of mind or understanding? Or would not this be to introduce a certain kind of mysterious Atheism, and under pretence of magnifying and advancing the Supreme Deity, monstrously to degrade the same? For, why might not senseless Matter be supposed to be the first original of all things, as well as a senseless, incorporeal Being?' (*Intellectual System*, B. IV. ch. 36. p. 585, ed. 1678.) Cf. *Alciphron*, Dial. IV. sect. 17, 18; also the references to Archbishop King, Bishop Brown [Browne], and the Neoplatonist writings attributed to the Areopagite Dionysius, on the nature of our theological knowledge.

[64] The so-called 'faculties' of the human soul are distinguishable functions, manifested in distinct mental products, of the same individual persons. The analogy is applied to the triune manifestation of Deity according to Plato and Plotinus. So also Hegel, with whom the universal, the par-

may farther add, that it is a doctrine of Platonics, and agrees with their master's tenets, [[65]to say] that τὸ ἓν or the first Hypothesis, contains all Excellence and Perfection, whereof it is the original source, and is *eminenter*, as the schools speak, intellect and life, as well as goodness; while the second Hypostasis is essentially Intellect, and, by participation, goodness, and life; and the third, Life essentially, and, by participation, goodness, and intellect.

353. Therefore, the whole being considered, it will not seem just to fix the imputation of Atheism upon those philosophers who held the doctrine of τὸ ἓν (sect. 287, 288); whether it be taken in an abstracted or collective, a metaphysical or merely vulgar meaning (sect. 300): that is, whether we prescind Unity from essence and intellect, since metaphysical distinctions of the divine attributes do not in reality divide them; or whether we consider the universal system of beings as One, since the union, connexion, and order of its members do manifestly infer a mind or intellect to be cause thereof.

354. The One, or τὸ ἓν, may be conceived either by composition or division. For as, on the one hand, we may say the world or universe is one whole, or one animal; so we may, on the other hand, consider τὸ ἓν by division or abstraction, as somewhat in the order of things prior to mind. In either sense there is no Atheism, so long as mind is admitted to preside and direct the animal; and so long as the *Unum*, or τὸ ἓν, is supposed not to exist without mind (sect. 287, 288). So that neither Heraclitus, nor Parmenides, nor Pythagoras, nor Plato; neither the Egyptians, nor Stoics, with their doctrine of a Divine Whole or Animal; nor Xenophanes with his ἓν καὶ πᾶν, are justly to be accounted Atheists. Therefore, modern Atheism[66], be it of Hobbes, Spinosa, Collins, or whom you will, is not to be countenanced by the learning and great names of antiquity.

355. Plato teacheth[67] that the doctrine concerning the One or Unit is a means to lead and raise the mind to the knowledge of him who truly is (sect. 294, 295). And it is a tenet both of Aristotle and Plato, that identity is a certain unity. The Pythagoreans also, as well as the Platonic philosophers, held *unum*

ticular, and the singular correspond to Intellect, Feeling, and Will — the trinity of human consciousness.

[65] Added in second edition.

[66] *i. e.* which professes to conceive the universe in abstraction from Living Mind.

[67] *Republic*, pp. 256, 257.

and *ens* to be the same. Consistently with which, that only can be said to exist which is one and the same. In things sensible and imaginable, as such, there seems to be no unity, nothing that can be called one, prior to all act of the mind; since they, being in themselves aggregates, consisting of parts or compounded of elements, are in effect many. Accordingly, it is remarked by Themistius[68], the learned interpreter of Aristotle, that to collect many notions into one, and to consider them as one, is the work of intellect and not of sense or fancy.

356. Aristotle himself, in his third book[69] of the Soul, saith it is the mind that maketh each thing to be one—τὸ δὲ ἓν ποιοῦν, τοῦτο ὁ νοῦς ἕκαστον. How this is done, Themistius is more particular observing that, as being conferreth essence, the mind, by virtue of her simplicity, conferreth simplicity upon compounded beings. And, indeed, it seemeth that the mind, so far forth as person, is individual (sect. 345, 346, 347); therein resembling the divine One by participation, and imparting to other things what itself participates from above. This is agreeable to the doctrine of the ancients; however the contrary opinion of supposing number to be an original primary quality in things, independent of the mind, may obtain among the moderns[70].

357. The Peripatetics taught that in all divisible things there was somewhat indivisible, and in all compounded things somewhat simple. This they derived from an act of the mind. And neither this simple indivisible unit, nor any sum of repeated units, consequently no number can be separated from the things themselves, and from the operation of the mind. Themistius goeth so far as to affirm that it cannot be separated from the words or signs; and, as it cannot be uttered without them, so, saith he, neither can it be conceived without them. Thus much upon the whole may be concluded, that, distinct from the mind and her operations, there is in created beings neither unit nor number[71].

358. Of inferior beings the human mind, self, or person, is the most simple and undivided essence (sect. 347). And the supreme

[68] See his Commentary on the *De Anima*, lib. III.

[69] C. 6, where Aristotle teaches that error becomes possible in and through the universalizing mind. Cf. the commentary of Themistius.

[70] *e.g.* the Cartesians and Locke.

[71] Cf. *New Theory of Vision*, sect. 109, with this and the two preceding sections—the earliest with the last expression of Berkeley on the subject in his works.

Father is the most perfect One. Therefore the flight of the mind towards God is called by the Platonics φυγὴ μόνου πρὸς μόνον. The supreme Being, saith Plotinus[72], as he excludes all diversity, is ever alike present. And we are then present to him, when, recollected and abstracted from the world and sensible objects, we are most free and disengaged from all variety (sect. 268). He adds that in the intuition of the Supreme Deity the soul finds her wished-for end and repose; which that philosopher calls awaking out of his body into himself.

359. In the tenth book of the *Arcane*, or *Divine Wisdom of the Egyptians*[73], we are taught that the supreme Being is not the cause of any created thing; but that he produced or made the Word; and that all created beings were made by the Word, which is accordingly styled the Cause of all causes: and that this was also the doctrine of the Chaldeans. Plato, likewise, in his Letter[74] to Hermias, Erastus, and Coriscus, speaks of God, the ruler and cause of all things, as having a Father: and, in his *Epinomis*[75], he expressly teacheth that the Word or λόγος made the world. Accordingly, Saint Augustine, in his Commentary on the beginning of Saint John's Gospel, having declared that Christ is the wisdom of God by which all things were made, observes that this doctrine was also found in the writings of philosophers, who taught that God had an only begotten Son by whom are all things.

360. Now, though Plato had joined with an imagination the most splendid and magnificent, an intellect not less deep and clear; yet it is not to be supposed that either he or any other philosophers of Greece or the East had by the light of nature obtained an adequate notion of the holy Trinity; nor even that their imperfect notion, so far as it went, was exactly just; nor perhaps that those sublime hints, which dart forth like flashes of light in the midst of a profound darkness, were originally struck from the hard rock of human reason; but rather derived, at least in part, by a Divine tradition, from the author of all things (sect. 298, 301). It seems a remarkable confirmation of this, what Plotinus observed in his fifth Ennead[76], that this doctrine of a Trinity

[72] *Fifth Ennead*, B. V. c. 9.
[73] Cf. sect. 288.
[74] Epist. VI. p. 323—not now assigned to Plato.
[75] P. 978. The *Epinomis* is not regarded as genuine.
[76] *Fifth Ennead*, B. I. c. 5. Ficinus, in his Commentary, here says: — 'Pythagorici

—Father, Mind, and Soul—was no late invention, but an ancient tenet.

361. Certain it is that the notion of a Trinity is to be found in the writings of many old heathen philosophers—that is to say, a notion of Three Divine Hypostases. Authority, Light, and Life did, to the eye of reason, plainly appear to support, pervade, and animate the mundane system or macrocosm. The same appeared in the microcosm[77], preserving soul and body, enlightening the mind, and moving the affections. And these were conceived to be necessary universal principles, co-existing and co-operating in such sort as never to exist asunder, but on the contrary to constitute one Sovereign of all things. And, indeed, how could power or authority avail or subsist without knowledge? or either without life and action?

362. In the administration of all things, there is Authority to establish, Law to direct, and Justice to execute. There is first the source of all perfection, or *Fons Deitatis*; secondly, the supreme reason, order, or λόγος; and lastly, the Spirit which quickens and inspires. We are sprung from the Father, irradiated or enlightened by the Son, and moved by the Spirit. Certainly, that there is Father, Son, and Spirit; that these bear analogy to the sun, light, and heat; and are otherwise expressed by the terms Principle, Mind, and Soul; by One or τὸ ἓν, Intellect, and Life; by Good, Word, and Love; and that generation was not attributed to the second Hypostasis, the νοῦς or λόγος, in respect of time, (sect. 352), but only in respect of origin and order, as an eternal necessary emanation;—these are the express tenets of Platonists, Pythagoreans, Egyptians, and Chaldeans.

363. Though it may be well presumed there is nothing to be found on that sublime subject in human writings which doth not bear the sure signatures of humanity; yet it cannot be denied that several Fathers of the Church have thought fit to illustrate

fingunt, in quadam quasi processione ipsius Unius, oriri Binarium, in quodam Binarii termino Ternarium suboriri, similiterque deinceps: Platonici similiter de prima essentia judicant.'

[77] Our own consciousness is *triune*—involving the three elements of Will or personality proper, Intellect, and Sensibility or life. These three elements are found in different proportions in individual persons, but they coexist and co-operate in all. Intellect itself in man is also a *triunity*—of Presentation or Sense, Representation or Ideation, and Reason—discursive and intuitive. These coexist and co-operate in all human beings.

the Christian doctrine of the holy Trinity, by similitudes and expressions borrowed from the most eminent heathens, whom they conceived to have been no strangers to that mystery; as hath been plainly proved by Bessarion[78], Eugubinus[79], and Doctor Cudworth[80].

364. Therefore, how unphilosophical soever that doctrine may seem to many of the present age, yet it is certain that men of greatest fame and learning among the ancient philosophers held a Trinity in the Godhead. It must be owned, that upon this point some later Platonists of the Gentile world seem to have bewildered themselves (as many Christians have also done), while they pursued the hints derived from their predecessors with too much curiosity.

365. But Plato himself considered that doctrine as a venerable mystery, not to be lightly treated of, or rashly divulged. Wherefore in a Letter to Dionysius[81], he writes (as he himself professeth) enigmatically and briefly in the following terms, which he giveth for a summary of his notion concerning the supreme Being, and which, being capable of divers senses, I leave to be deciphered by the learned reader:—*Περὶ τὸν πάντων βασιλέα πάντ' ἐστὶ, καὶ ἐκείνου ἕνεκα πάντα, καὶ ἐκεῖνο αἴτιον ἁπάντων τῶν καλῶν. δεύτερον δὲ, περὶ τὰ δεύτερα, καὶ τρίτον περὶ τὰ τρίτα.* Plato enjoins Dionysius, over and over, with great earnestness, not to suffer what he communicates concerning the mysteries of the Divine nature to fall into illiterate or vulgar hands, giving it withal as a reason for this caution, that nothing would seem more ridiculous or absurd to the common run of mankind. He adds that, in regard writings might miscarry, the prudent way was to write nothing at all on those matters, but to teach and learn them by word of mouth: for which reason, saith he, I have never wrote anything thereon; nor is there, nor shall there ever be, anything of Plato's extant on the subject. He

[78] Cardinal Bessarion (1395—1470), the learned Platonist. See his *Adversus Calumniatorem Platonis*, lib II. c. 3.

[79] In the treatise *De Perenni Philosophia* (1540), lib. II. c. 7—18, of Augustinus Steuchus, Eugubinus, (*i.e.* of Eugubium, now Gubbio, in Central Italy), born in the end of the fifteenth century, and died in 1550. This Cretan Bishop and Platonizing divine gathered into the treatise referred to a profusion of illustrations of the harmony of Eastern and Greek Philosophy with Christianity, as to the divine Trinity in Unity, creation, and the immortality of souls. Berkeley seems to have been well acquainted with the *De Perenni Philosophia*—a curious and little-known book.

[80] See *Intellectual System*. B. IV. c. 36.

[81] Epist. II. p. 312—not Plato's. See the comment on this passage in the second book of Proclus on the Theology of Plato, quoted in Taylor's Plato.

farther adds, as for what hath been now said, it belongs all to Socrates.

366. And, indeed, what this philosopher in his *Phædrus*[82] speaketh of the super-celestial region, and the Divinity resident therein, is of a strain not to be relished or comprehended by vulgar minds; to wit, essence really existent, object of intellect alone, without colour, without figure, without any tangible quality. He might very justly conceive that such a description must seem ridiculous to sensual men.

367. As for the perfect intuition of divine things, that he supposeth to be the lot of pure souls, beholding by a pure light, initiated, happy, free and unstained from those bodies, wherein we are now imprisoned like oysters. But, in this mortal state, we must be satisfied to make the best of those glimpses within our reach (sect. 335, 337). It is Plato's remark, in his *Theætetus*[83], that while we sit still we are never the wiser, but going into the river, and moving up and down, is the way to discover its depths and shallows. If we exercise and bestir ourselves, we may even here discover something.

368. The eye by long use comes to see even in the darkest cavern: and there is no subject so obscure but we may discern some glimpse of truth by long poring on it. Truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few. Certainly, where it is the chief passion, it doth not give way to vulgar cares and views; nor is it contented with a little ardour in the early time of life; active, perhaps, to pursue, but not so fit to weigh and revise. He that would make a real progress in knowledge must dedicate his age as well as youth, the later growth as well as first fruits, at the altar of Truth.

> Cujusvis est errare; nullius nisi insipientis in errore perseverare.
> *Cic.* [*Orat. Philip.* XII. 2.]

[82] Pp 246—258. Cf. *Symposium*, p. 211. [83] P. 200.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX

TO

THE EDITOR'S PREFACE TO ALCIPHRON.

THIRD EDITION OF ALCIPHRON.

THE following additions and other changes are found in the text of the Third Edition of *Alciphron*, published in London in 1752, a few months before Berkeley's death, and referred to in the Editor's Preface to the present Edition of that work, p. 5, note. It has been overlooked in all former Editions of his Collected Works, and in all the posthumous Editions of *Alciphron* known to me.

First Dialogue.

Page 54, line 1. Note added under sentence ending 'religion and morality'—

'* The moral virtues are the political offspring which flattery begot upon pride. *Fable of the Bees*, Part I. p. 37.'

Second Dialogue.

P. 76, l. 14. Note added under sentence ending 'like all other fashions'—

'* In morals there is no greater certainty than in fashions. *Fable of the Bees*, Part I. p. 379.'

P. 100, l. 39. 'Instead of these old fashioned things.... the sweet

society of life.' This sentence is transferred from Lysicles to Crito, who then proceeds,—'But I thought, Lysicles, &c.'

Third Dialogue.

P. 111, l. 23. The following sentences open the observations of Alciphron in the Third Edition:—

'*Alc.* The word Free-thinker, as it comprehends men of very different sorts and sentiments, cannot, in a strict sense, be said to constitute one particular sect, holding a certain system of positive and distinct opinions. Though it must be owned we do all agree in certain points of unbelief, or negative principles, which agreement, in some sense, unites us under the common idea of one sect. But then, those negative principles, as they happen to take root in men of different age, temper, and education, do produce various tendencies, opinions, and characters, widely differing one from another. You are not to think that our greatest strength, &c.'

P. 114, l. 13. 'He must' instead of 'He might.'

P. 118, l. 4. Note, under 'virtuous actions'—

'* There can never be less self-enjoyment than in these supposed wise characters, these selfish computers of happiness and private good. *Characteristics*, vol. III. p. 301.'

P. 126, l. 15. Note, under 'lose sight of it'—

'* Men's first thoughts on moral matters are generally better than their second: their natural notions better than those refined by study. *Characteristics*, vol. I. p. 13.'

Fourth Dialogue.

P. 155, l. 11. Alciphron proceeds thus:—

'*Alc.* I cannot help thinking that some fallacy runs through this whole ratiocination, though perhaps I may not readily point it out. It seems to me that every other sense may as well be deemed a language as that of vision. Smells and tastes, for instance, are signs that inform us of other qualities to which they have neither likeness nor necessary connexion.

'*Euph.* That they are signs is certain, as also that language and all other signs agree in the general nature of sign, or so far forth as signs. But it is as certain that all signs are not language: not even all significant sounds: such as the natural cries of animals, or the inarticulate sounds and interjections of men. It is the articulation, combination, variety, copiousness, extensive and general use and easy application of signs (all which are commonly found in vision) that constitute the true

nature of language. Other senses may indeed furnish signs; and yet those signs have no more right than inarticulate sounds to be thought a language[1].

'*Alc.* Hold! let me see. In language, &c.'

P. 159. The author's note ([97]), referring to the Theory of Vision and to the Cheselden case, is omitted.

Fifth Dialogue.

P. 181, l. 22, &c. 'It is certainly .... disgrace it.' These sentences are attributed to *Crito.*

P. 189, l. 21. After 'points and duties' add '(whether positive or moral) are relative, &c.'

Seventh Dialogue.

P. 301, l. 34. After 'operates about them,' the following sentence is introduced:—

'Certainly it must be allowed that we have some notion, that we understand, or know what is meant by, the terms *myself*, *will*, *memory*, *love*, *hate*, and so forth; although, to speak exactly, these words do not suggest so many distinct ideas.'

P. 305, l. 22. After 'And that grace may,' add 'for ought you know.'

PP. 311—12. The passage within brackets—'But to convince you .. even where we have not *ideas*,' which is omitted in the former Collected Editions of Berkeley, is retained in the Third Edition.

P. 312, l. 8—10. 'On the other hand .... scale.' This sentence is omitted.

P. 314, l. 23. After sentence ending 'general idea of number,' the following is introduced:—

'The signs, indeed, do in their use imply relations or proportions of things: but these relations are not abstract general ideas, being founded in particular things, and not making of themselves distinct ideas to the mind, exclusive of the particular ideas and the signs.'

P. 315, l. 12. For 'it is naturally led'—'it seems naturally led.'

P. 316, l. 23. After 'sets rational agents at work,' insert—'that signs may imply or suggest the relations of things; which relations, habitudes, or proportions, as they cannot be by us understood without the help of signs, so, being thereby expressed and confuted, they enable us to act with regard to things that the true end, &c.'

PP. 326—27. The passage within brackets—'not to mention other

[1] Cf. *Siris*, sect. 254, note 9 by the Editor.

gross mistakes.... nor truth in any'—omitted in the Collected Editions of Berkeley, was retained in the Third Edition.

P. 327, l. 9. After 'make a question of it,' proceed thus—'You say the appetites have by necessity of nature a tendency towards their respective objects. This we grant; and withal that appetite, if you please, is not free. But you go further, and tell us that the understanding cannot alter its idea, nor infer indifferently anything from anything. What then? Can we not act at all if we cannot alter the nature of objects, and may we not be free in other things if we are not at liberty to make absurd inferences? You take for granted, &c.'

A remarkable circumstance in the Third Edition of *Alciphron* is that Chaps. 5, 6, 7, in Dial. VII., on Nominalism, and against *abstract general ideas*, contained in the two previous, and in all the posthumous Editions of *Alciphron*, are omitted. This is important in a comparison of the early with the later philosophy of Berkeley. Does it mean that he modified his early Nominalism in his old age?

Also, various passages in *Alciphron*, bracketed as additions to the Second Edition, and noted in my Edition as 'afterwards omitted,' *i. e.* in the Collected Editions of Berkeley, are found in the Third Edition. It seems that these Editions were all founded on the First Edition.

The 1733 Edition of *The Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained* is appended to the Third Edition of *Alciphron* in the copy now before me.

A. C. F.

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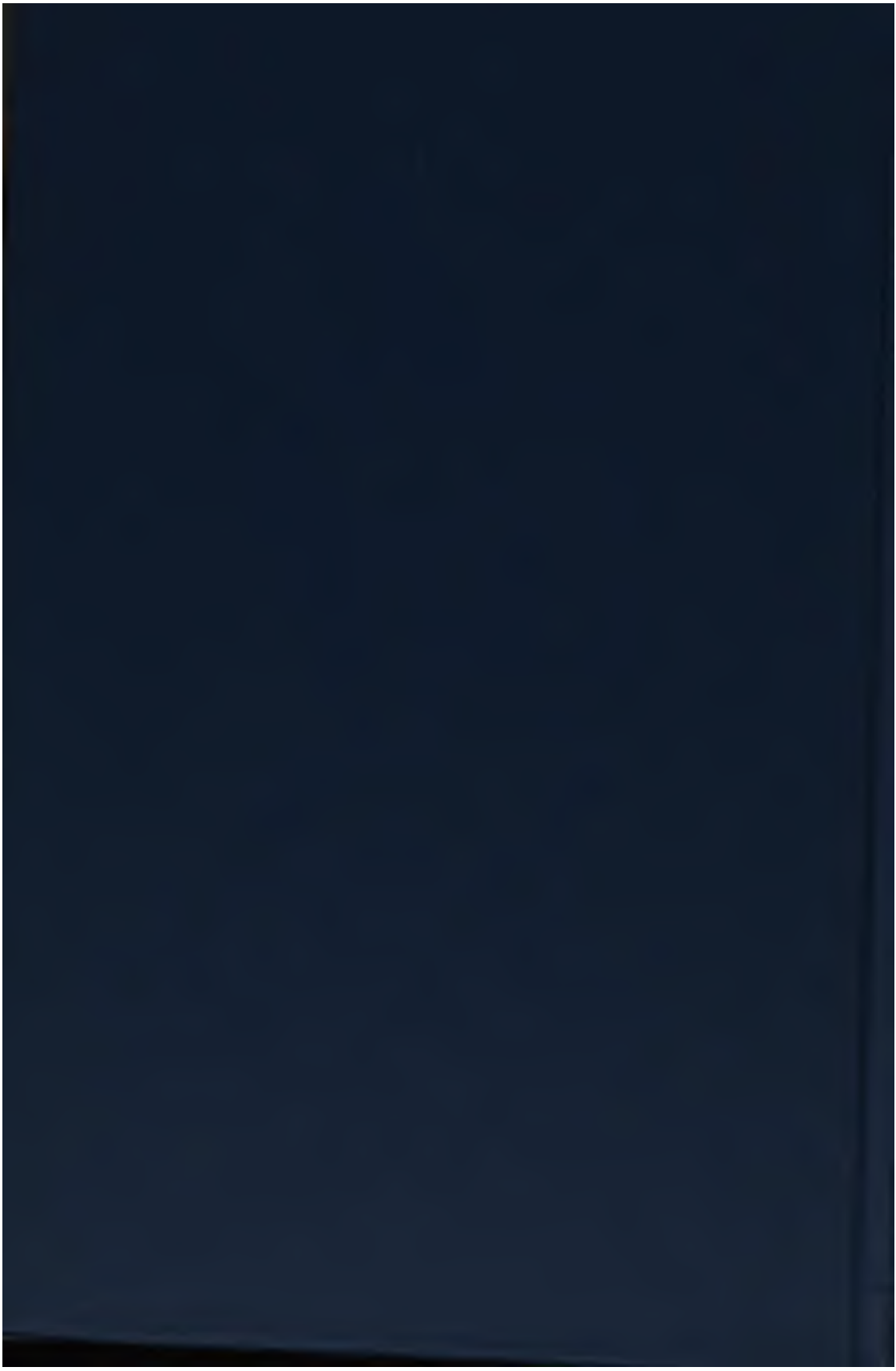
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